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# The Merit of Intensive Leadership Development Programs on Building-Level Administrators' Sustainability

Sonja Jean Robertson  
*University of Southern Mississippi*

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The University of Southern Mississippi

THE MERIT OF INTENSIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ON  
BUILDING-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS' SUSTAINABILITY

by

Sonja Jean Robertson

Abstract of a Dissertation  
Submitted to the Graduate School  
of The University of Southern Mississippi  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2011

## ABSTRACT

### THE MERIT OF INTENSIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ON BUILDING-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS' SUSTAINABILITY

by Sonja Jean Robertson

May 2011

With recent research identifying the propensity and ability of principals to lead as a key culprit of school and district failure, it would seem that one of the most reasonable steps should be to better determine how effective specially designed leadership development programs in the area of educational leadership are at not only equipping principals and school-based leaders, but at creating a foundation and a prevailing culture for longevity or sustainability in those positions. If the development of principals and other school-based leaders is vital to the improvement of schools, the effectiveness of the measures implemented to bring about that improvement has to be examined. Whether those measures are designed with the purpose of increasing leadership capacity via the retention or sustainability of principals, which could result in a positive effect on the achievement of students or by reforming systems of recruitment and induction within the organization, a greater effort is needed to keep effective principals in those positions where increased student outcomes are manifested.

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A Dissertation  
Submitted to the Graduate School  
of The University of Southern Mississippi  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
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Approved:

Ronald Styron  
Director

Kyna Shelley

Gaylynn Parker

David Lee

Susan A. Siltanen  
Dean of the Graduate School

May 2011

## DEDICATION

For Johnnie Martin Robertson, a mother, who is gone, but whose legacy and belief in continuous education lives on in a daughter's fulfillment of a dream.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Principals have been vacating their positions for a variety of reasons. Whether those reasons were due to retirement, regardless of it being traditional or premature, due to unforeseen circumstances, or because of the pressures of current accountability regulations, sincere and tenacious effort to revitalize the capacity building proficiency as well as the consistency of implementation of the work of those remaining and entering the field of educational administration must be taken seriously (Hargreaves, 2005). It is safe to state that professional development of building level administrators in K-12 education at the outset of entering the field typically involves a variety of required training for career licensure (Petzko, 2004). Nevertheless, at a time when a once prestigious and rarely vacant position has become increasingly difficult to fill, the need for relevant, effective, rigorous, and supportive professional development for principals has reached a status of utmost urgency (Evans & Mohr, 1999; Whitaker, 2002). According to Colvin (2007), "Haycock said the achievement gap that educators and political leaders talk so much about cannot be narrowed, let alone closed, without strong leaders who believe in students' potential" (p.15). This is supported by an ever-increasing chorus of research endeavors that target the endorsement of leadership development initiatives that result in improved student outcomes (DeVita, 2007).

That notwithstanding, the issue of adequate support structures for administrators has seemingly taken center-stage with the birth and evolution of

Intensive Leadership Development Programs (ILDLP). These programs are tailored to meet the needs of promising novice administrators and have evolved to encompass the needs of veteran principals. All over the United States, programs to enhance the professional growth of school level administrators have been designed and implemented. Many have been deemed effective; however, the question of whether these programs cultivate longevity in building level administrators or whether they serve to foster rapid mobility toward promotion beyond the building level has become a legitimate concern for this researcher. Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, and Orr (2007) fittingly maintained the stance that the yield from the expectation for improved academic performance as an eventual and natural derivative of enhanced leadership capacity has subsequently resulted in the increasing availability of substantive research conducted in the area of leadership development. In short, “a surge of investment in and scrutiny of programs that recruit, prepare and develop principals” (p.1) ingresses onto the stage that has been set for the development of principals in this rapidly mutating age of accountability and potentially declining time of sustainability.

The effectiveness of program successfulness with regard to providing building level leaders with the support that will sustain them in their endeavors beyond the typical three to five year stint as administrators must be examined more closely, especially if a priority of ILDPs is retention. It has been supported by research that change or continuous school improvement is not typically seen before three to five years. If that is so, then what happens to the school when

the leadership within the school changes prior to the three to five years? The culture, climate, morale, and success of the school and its clientele are impacted. It would stand to reason that schools that experience high rates of turnover within leadership find it more difficult to cultivate effectiveness because inherent in the organizational structure is an atypical systemic process that breeds failure. The organization has not been successful at accomplishing the task of getting the right people on the bus in the right seats (Collins, 2001). In the context of real school and classroom application, Haycock (2007) challenges one to contemplate the implications of selection of instructional personnel, inclusive of the building leader, when determining the academic needs of those students who are categorized as underserved. One must ask, how does this selection of who will instruct children relate to how districts and states choose to develop principals, and is it a greater symptom of low or declining expectations at every level of the local school district continuum? According to DeVita, Colvin, Darling-Hammond, and Haycock's presentations at the Wallace Foundation National Conference in 2007, the thoroughfare by which the critical components necessary for impactful school reform is paved with the effectual implementation carried out by school and district leaders.

While a plethora of literature now exists regarding building level administrators' effectiveness when examining what characterizes effective leaders, not much has been conducted to address the strength of intensive professional development as it pertains to the sustainability of the building level leader (Petersen, 2002). In fact, documentation of demonstrated leadership

attributes has only recently made its way into research in the educational leadership field (DeVita et al., 2007). Subsequently, the focus of inquiry now must center on whether intensive type programs have been effective at staving off the escalating issue of failing to sustain K-12 building level administrators. John Naisbett stated, “in a healthy organization, rewards come by empowering others, not by climbing over them” (Zadra, 2006, p. 11). This premise supports the impetus behind the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) in reference to the 2008 Educational Leadership Policy Standards. Because the role of principal operates in perpetual oscillation between manager and instruction leader, the revised standards offer various entities that are impacted by the availability of strong, multi-faceted leaders in the realm of school leadership a cohesive set of guidelines aimed at their development and continued growth (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008). The ability to adeptly navigate the stations of manager and instructional leader is of necessity in today’s climate of increased accountability; leaders who demonstrate elements of strength in the principalship when considering particular skills, but fall short when the proverbial rubber meets the road with regard to implementation of best practices relevant to their specific need, may inadvertently result in the deterioration of desired learning outcomes which is the antithesis of the stated goals of accountability (Waters & Grubb, 2004). Waters and Grubb (2004) asserted that policymakers should:

commit the resources necessary for high-quality, rigorous, and research-based professional development programs for principals. Not all states

require ongoing professional development of administrators for relicensure. Establishing such a requirement, then providing the incentives and funding needed to implement it, sends a powerful message about the importance of continuous learning for school-level leaders and the use of research as the basis for their practice. (p.12)

Recent trends in professional development aimed at the retention or “sustainability” of building level administrators indicate a focus on more “intensive approaches” to the growth of school level administrators. This proposed study sought to investigate the relationship between Intensive Leadership Development Programs (ILDP) and the retention or sustainability of building level administrators. While there is evidence that some states are making moves toward addressing the programmatic issues tied to principal preparation programs, not much is changing by way of the embedded components that can be perceived as divergent from their goals (Colvin, 2008). Researchers responsible for a leadership development study funded by the Wallace Foundation stated that:

We have learned that improved leadership training is essential, but not enough. New principals need mentoring. But mentoring is more than a sympathetic ear. It means real guidance from knowledgeable professionals who have been trained for their mentoring role and who are engaged for a long-enough period of time to provide real benefits to the new leader. We also know that even veteran leaders and their teams need support as well- ongoing professional development that reduces



isolation and builds skills, time to focus on instruction, authority to allocate resources to meet the needs of their schools, and the right data to help them accurately guide their teachers and students. (DeVita et al., 2007, p. 6)

A brief review of initiatives implemented to develop leaders within the corporate structure was examined in this study to provide a view into their efforts at developing, cultivating, and sustaining their leadership pool. This perspective was important in determining similarities, variations, and distinct differences. The examination of the literature related to corporations noted considerable similarities such as initiative design, the establishing of a cohesive plan and a set of competencies and objectives, as well as utilization of specific best practices in determining the leadership needs of employees, such as mentoring, networking, and the opportunity to receive constructive feedback. The most notable difference in approach was discovered to be in the area of induction and retention of employees with regard to the early identification of leadership potential within the organization. Several of the organizations valued the identification and development of their “bench strength” (Day & O’Connor, 2006, p. 9) as a means of preparing their potential leaders from within. Some also expanded their vision address their leaders’ ability to effectively function in the global market. Variations revolved around the attributes deemed necessary for a leader to be classified as having strong leadership potential. In some cases, innovation and flexibility were critical factors, and in other cases, having the capacity to leverage “soft skills” (Leck & Wang, 2004, p. 61) into the leadership

cauldron was considered to be of value.

Additional variables examined included the relationship between years of experience at the building level and the reported belief that participation in ILDPs resulted in promotion into district level positions, and the relationship between the reported value of ILDP and its actual perceived contribution to sustainability and growth in the field of educational administration. An additional relationship examined was the relationship between the expense of ILDPs for a school district and the return on the investment for the sponsoring district. For the purpose of this research, “intensive approach” was defined as on-going professional development lasting three or more days over a specified period of time. “Sustainability” referred to the retention of the building level administrator and the intent to persist in the position of building level administrator, and “building level administrator” referred to any person operating in the role of assistant principal or principal. The study addressed the areas of demographics, the types of intensive professional developments, the financial expense of the intensive professional developments, perceived value of ILDPs, and the career aspirations of the subjects.

### Statement of the Problem

Does participation in Intensive Leadership Development Programs (ILDPs) in the development of school level leaders predict one’s intent to persist in the role of the principalship? An abundance of leadership/professional development programs designed to enhance the leadership skills of school-based administrators exist throughout the United States. These programs take

the place in colleges and universities, leadership institutes, departments of education, and school districts. However, while the programs have been implemented to address the specific need of the leadership abilities of principals and other school based leaders as a means of enabling them to develop into relevant, effective, lasting leaders, and improve the achievement of students, the results on the effectiveness of sustaining these leaders for significant periods of time is crucial and therefore a pivotal component in the overall value of such programs with respect to developing and sustaining the leadership capacity of a learning organization.

The issue of leadership development ripples through the many and varying entities involved in the educational leadership learning continuum from the stakeholders who have a significant investment beginning with the public school classroom to those that maintain an equally important investment in the university lecture hall. According to research presented in this study, there is a connection between the variables of school leadership and student outcomes. Therefore, one could assert that if quality learning continues to elude school districts across the country and, more specifically, the state of Mississippi, the all too familiar goal of increased student achievement will continue in what seems to be a downward spiral. The implication of such an occurrence not only has a local impact, but a national and global one as well. Given the current state of accountability in Mississippi and the United States with the determining of student growth, more and more schools and school districts are falling into improvement status as defined by No Child Left Behind (NCLB)/Elementary and

Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and their respective states' accountability model.

With recent research identifying the propensity and ability of principals to lead as a key culprit of school and district failure, it would seem that one of the most reasonable steps should be to better determine how effective specially designed leadership development programs in the area of educational leadership are at not only equipping principals and school-based leaders, but at creating a foundation and a prevailing culture for longevity or sustainability in those positions. If the development of principals and other school-based leaders is vital to the improvement of schools, the effectiveness of the measures implemented to bring about that improvement has to be examined. Whether those measures are designed with the purpose of increasing leadership capacity via the retention or sustainability of principals, which could result in a positive effect on the achievement of students or by reforming systems of recruitment and induction within the organization, a greater effort is needed to keep effective principals in those positions where increased student outcomes are manifested. Without such efforts, schools and districts, in particular, low-performing schools and districts will continue to suffer increased rates of turnover, which will subsequently lead to school and district takeovers by states.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain if participation in leadership development initiatives is reported as instrumental in sustainability as measured by the "intent to persist" in the administrative role of the principalship. While

there is no clearly defining research to support a shortage in the principalship role in the United States, there is an escalating concern that areas in need of high-quality principals continue to have a less than adequate pool of candidates from which to make a selection. With that being stated, properly credentialed does not translate into having the required skills necessary to effectively navigate one's way through the varied and ever-changing job description of the principalship. As a result, there is a prevailing culture that exists with regard to potential for career success in some areas that ultimately impacts a district's ability to attract the people with the level of quality and aptitude required to improve schools (Mitgang, 2003). High quality candidates oftentimes do not select low-performing school districts for employment. According to this brief by the Wallace Foundation, a lack of confidence in the quality of principal candidates is a very real issue for school district leaders.

The leadership study funded through the Wallace Foundation addressed various aspects of developing novice and veteran principals. Some of the literature that resulted from this study supported the idea that the opportunities for professional growth embedded in a district's efforts to strengthen the development initiatives for its leaders is entrenched in a continuum for learning from entry into the role all the way through the process toward mastery. The conundrum that is created with this approach is littered with fragments of the ever-changing and evolving skill base required of candidates. Fortunately, because the approach is nestled strategically in a cocoon of clearly defined theoretical principles and practicality derived from clinical application, the

candidates are provided with the added benefit of being able to draw from the experiences of colleagues through the incorporation of study groups, mentoring, and peer coaching support (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, & Orr, 2007).

Finally, districts spend thousands of dollars annually on professional development with many of these types of leadership development programs being extremely costly. While the federal government, through grants, makes funding available to support such initiatives, districts must examine the feasibility of sending school leaders to participate in such programs, especially if the yield from participation is less than 3 years of service by the administrator. This subsequently creates a necessity to examine the practicality of instituting embedded measures that provide for a return on investments, monetary and in-kind, from those building level leaders being supported (United States Department Of Education, 2006).

### Hypotheses

This study was guided by the following hypotheses:

H1: There is a statistically significant relationship between participation in Intensive Leadership Development Programs for principals and intent to persist in the role of the principalship.

H2: There is a statistically significant relationship between administrators' views of Intensive Leadership Development Programs and the reported contribution of the program's effect on career sustainability and growth.

H3: There is a statistically significant relationship between administrators'

reported commitment to participation in intensive professional development and the perceived value of the ILDP by district leadership.

H4: There is a statistically significant relationship between the perceived value of Intensive Leadership Development Programs to district leadership and the districts' use of Intensive Leadership Development Programs for incentives.

H5: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived value of Intensive Leadership Development Programs selected by administrators and the districts' requirement and procedures for dissemination of newly-gained knowledge.

H6: There is a statistically significant relationship between the high profile Intensive Leadership Development Programs and intent to persist.

H7: There is a statistically significant difference in the administrators' intent to persist based on participation in district-operated Intensive Leadership Development Programs than in the administrators' intent to persist based upon participation in Intensive Leadership Development Programs sponsored by outside agencies.

H8: There is a statistically significant difference in a districts' financial support of Intensive Leadership Development Programs for principals based on the length of tenure of principals.

#### Definition of Terms

*Principal* – the chief or head of a school serving any variation of grades K-12.

*Sustainability* – retention in the principalship role or intent to persist in the

role.

*Administrator* – building or school level principal.

*Intensive Leadership Development Programs (ILDPS)* – professional development programs that last for 3 or more days with the goal of building leadership capacity.

*Leadership capacity* – a district’s ability to maximize its leadership potential to yield positive and sustainable outcomes.

*Leadership development* – seminars, trainings, or workshops conducted with the purpose of building and strengthening the leadership of individuals within an organization (learning or corporate).

*Longevity* – the length of time or experience performing in a specific building level administrative role.

*Bench strength* – an organization’s internal pool of available qualified candidates for potential leadership positions.

*Soft skills* – traits possessed by individuals that would predispose them to be empathic, reflective, socially conscious, and adaptable in various settings; skills that are not classified as traditional management or leadership skills.

#### Delimitation

An anticipated delimitation is the access to the complete participant list of individuals who attended the Harvard Principal’s Institute from 1999 to 2010 and the complete participant list of individuals who attended the Millsaps Principal’s Institute from 2001 to 2010.



### Justification

Professional development, leadership development, Intensive Leadership Development Programs, or whatever initiatives aimed at better preparing and supporting principals and other administrators in education are rife with ideas on how to improve leadership capacity. However, with the increasing number of options now available, do they accomplish the ultimate goal of selecting, retaining, and sustaining individuals for longevity? Are these attempts successful at cultivating and nourishing leaders who will not only impact student learning by way of improvement in the era of NCLB, but who will remain after the turbulence has been successfully navigated? This study was born out of this researcher's interest in what occurs with principals after attending Intensive Leadership Development Programs that are sometimes high profile with a lot of notoriety and expense.

Collins (2001) elaborated on a scenario regarding the idea of "confronting the brutal facts" (p. 65). This becomes applicable in terms of this study when districts, state departments of education, and universities have to examine whether or not fostering the leadership capacity of their principals by providing the necessary supports is a reality, especially when it comes to sustaining them.

### Assumptions

All principals have participated in some form of Intensive Leadership Development Programs as a part of their respective state's licensure requirements.

Most professional development programs now follow a multi-day format

that is scheduled for consecutive days or across an interval of time.

### Summary

As previously discussed, the role of the school-based leader, specifically, the principal, is laced with various and increasingly more taxing areas of responsibilities. This has subsequently led to a form of metamorphosis of the position from that of manager to that of instructional leader. More than that, the metamorphosis is continuously being re-altered to be inclusive of traits that are being classified as non-traditional as they pertain to leadership in schools in order to build a school leader's capacity for bringing about sustainable school reform.

The issues addressed by this study focused on the area of sustainability. Are leaders who have been placed in the role of principal, assistant principal, or school-based leader supported professionally by their states and local districts to effectively operate in and remain in the role long enough to bring about real, sustainable improvement? The researcher examined leadership development initiatives that have taken on the formidable task of not only identifying and selecting individuals, but that have also forged ahead to provide those who are chosen with the mechanisms of support to sustain them while they serve in those leadership roles. Therefore, the question that remains is, Are these initiatives effective in sustaining and retaining principals? This question explains the need for scrutinously broaching states, districts, school improvement agencies, leadership organizations, and individual consultants' efforts to address this matter.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

#### Introduction

Principals and other school-based leaders are continually thrust into the fluid domain of educational leadership, accountability, and public school reform. The guise under which they are expected to navigate this nebulous realm is via professional or leadership development. The literature and federal law support the call for increased attention to the development of new and veteran school-based leaders. The implications of this research could be far-reaching in that thousands of dollars are expended annually by both school districts and foundations to support efforts at providing professional development opportunities for principals. This is vital because of the need to assess how effective specific attempts at improvement have been progressing, thereby making it necessary to track past participants with regard to their current status in the field of educational administration.

The literature that undergirded this study captured the efforts made by organizations, both educational and business, to address the many issues that today's leaders encounter with the ultimate goal being the sustainability of school leaders which will translate into longevity in the role at a given school site.

In addition to the theoretical framework for what has been labeled intensive leadership development for the purpose of this research, the literature also addressed leadership traits, recruitment and induction of leaders, and the cost effectiveness of the leadership development initiatives.

## Theoretical Framework

The metamorphosis of principal leadership over the last 20-25 years can be traced back to the theory that evolved out of the search for an alternative to the classical and human approach theories to organization (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2000). That alternative, the behavioral science theory, was an ancestor to the organizational and leadership theories for which the foundation of this research is developed. Senge's (1990) support for the implementation of symbiotic relationships within an organization is a crucial element in the professional growth of individuals working within a system. Therefore, creating synchronization between the goals for the school or organization and the type of professional growth it desires for its employees is of necessity (Bolman & Deal, 2003). This premise is reflected with the embedding of statements that lie steeped in the call for professional growth as one reads through the standards for the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996).

Bolman and Deal (2003) asserted that habitual practice of preparing for change in an organization lay in the decision to transform "management" (p. 8). It was, according to the authors, traditionally held that when all seemed well within the organization, the nuts and bolts of management were in sync. In the recent age of examining how organizations failed to attain success, a multitude of hypotheses as to how to affect change have been studied. Notwithstanding the earnest efforts of those seeking answers, the authors maintained that a focus on solutions that failed to be global in scope was often the outcome, when what was

truly needed was “reframing” (p. 19). With reframing, those seeking solutions were opened to fresher and keener insights on top of ultimately identifying approaches that were relevant, effective, and supportive (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Whitaker, 2002). Peter Senge’s (1990) view on organizations cemented the theory of reframing by cultivating and developing the belief that the creation of outcomes derived from an evolution of thought in symbiotic relationships was essential to organizational growth. This, according to Whitaker (2002), represented a critical component of many of the professional development programs for K-12 administrators being used today. Senge (1990) and Bolman and Deal’s (2003) conviction regarding the organic nature of organizations and leadership indicate firm grounding in their research. They ascertained that leadership and organizations were evolutionary, not stagnant, plus provided the argument that for organizations to live, leaders must operate within the framework of systemically constructed and driven leadership that fostered tolerance to the forces of change that would appear within said systems (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Senge, 1990). Both theories support the construct that leaders in effective organizations possess the ability to garner follow-ship from those in which they lead. For that reason, the term school leaders is being used synonymously in this context with leaders of organizations that require the same systemic thinking and reframing of thought prescribed by Senge (1990) and Bolman and Deal (2003). Senge’s theory on systems thinking thus provided a workable foundation on which to erect the framework for the development of sound, relevant, effective, rigorous, and supportive professional development

opportunities for novice and veteran K-12 administrators (Whitaker, 2002).

Lunenburg and Ornstein (2000) identified effective leaders as those who demonstrate characteristics and skills such as creativity, ambition, acceptance of responsibility, and organization. While the list is not all inclusive, it is in alignment with a theory of leadership that is found in educational organizations today. According to Bass (1997), effective leadership is a combination of transactional and transformation approaches which create the opportunity for an infusion that allows leaders to place emphasis on doing what is right for their school because it is the right thing to do as well as invoking rewards or incentives as a means of motivation. While many have contributed to the prevailing thoughts on developing leaders in educational administration, those deemed by this researcher as central to the design of this study represent a cross-section of ideologies from business and educational arenas, providing credence to the integration of business and educational thought on preparing school leaders.

#### Expectations of Transformational School-Based Leaders

In describing the “ideal principal,” Hausman, Crow, & Sperry (2000) alluded to the context and role in which the modern principal operates. He or she now has the responsibility of maneuvering “decentralized school structures, increasing and changing environmental boundaries and roles, less homogeneous schools, closer contact with stakeholders, and a market-driven view of education” as well as understanding of his or her own personal and professional needs (p. 12). The ideal principal requires a multitude of abilities and the capacity to utilize them in such a way as to accommodate the ever-expanding context of the

principalship. A study on how principals view professional growth opportunities for their staffs found for some of the subjects that it was paramount for the building leaders to participate in professional development opportunities, because in order to lead the development of their own staffs, they must lead by example by engaging regularly in staff development to gain knowledge and to improve on current practices (Short & Jones, 1991).

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) purported that transformational leadership provided greater opportunity to yield results that exceed expectations. In *School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results*, transformational leadership is described as “a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents” (p. 4). An instructional leader who has been found to be worth his or her weight in gold was described as a leader whose greatest focus was on curriculum and instruction. He or she must have the fortitude to galvanize who and what was available to realize objectives in addition to producing and sustaining an atmosphere of high expectations for increased performance academically as well as respect for the targeted clientele (Grogan & Andrews, 2002).

In a review of priorities of principals to ascertain what “should” be priority and what “actually” was a priority, Whitaker and Turner (2000), determined that the climate of the school was a top priority for both “should” and “actual” (p.18). However, two classified as “should” in their top five did not make the top five of the “actual” based upon participant responses. “To encourage innovative teaching practices” (p.18) number four on the list of should and “to get students

more actively involved in their own learning” (p.18) number five on the list of should were ranked sixth and tenth, respectively, on the list of actuals. The authors thusly concluded that the principals in this study saw that all of their responsibilities were of value, but they felt there was always a need to do more. An area of needed improvement for these principals was found to be time management. According to the authors of this study, principals must continue their development in this area. Associated with the time management concern was the issue of prioritization of specific tasks. It was recommended that further examination of these points was needed as well as working to bridge the gap between perceived and actual priorities in effort to gain a greater state of balance in the performance of the job as principal.

The Stanford School Leadership Study (2005) stated the following about principals of today:

Principals are expected to be educational visionaries, instructional and curriculum leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public relations and communications experts, budget analysts, facility managers, special programs administrators, as well as guardians of various legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives. In addition, principals are expected to serve the often conflicting needs and interests of many stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, district office officials, unions and state and federal agencies. As a result, many scholars and practitioners argue that the demands of the job requirements far exceed the reasonable capacities of any one person. (Davis, Darling-



Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005, p. 3)

The purpose of Stanford study was to examine administrator programs and if the structures that had been erected to undergird such initiatives with the goal of producing quality leaders were effective. The programs examined were both pre-service and in-service programs tailored for principals, both aspiring and novice. One notion being closely scrutinized as a result of preliminary findings was that the professional growth of a principal should not be hit and miss or end once the preparatory program had concluded, to the contrary, it should be “on-going, career-staged, and seamless” (p.12). School districts have begun to venture toward building in-service programs that aid in supporting principals. While some attempts by larger urban districts to provide continuous support had been made, the number was limited as to how many would continue to provide that support once the candidate for hire was on the job. An example of a district’s endeavor was that of New York City in the development of a Leadership Academy that focused on principal development for novice and veteran leaders. Their efforts at securing sustainable leadership worked toward continuous development that served to create a “lasting infrastructure” of leadership (p. 16). According to this study, districts that had moved toward development of their own “academies” for their leaders had done so as a part of school or district reform. Areas of focus for these intensive developments had been a provision of support for coaching and evaluating staff, problem-solving, and mentoring. Some states (Missouri, Georgia, and North Carolina) led in the movement to develop leadership academies for not only their principals but for superintendents as well.

In addition, in Jefferson County, Kentucky, partnerships between public and private entities have collaborated to meet the growing need of its school leaders by providing in-service and on-going support to new principals and new assistant principals.

In a study conducted on the “sustainability of innovative schools” (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006, p. 125), it was determined that efforts to sustain innovations such as professional learning communities required systems to discover (a) the means by which leadership could be dispersed; (b) the mores of the educational climate to be maintained or strengthened, and (c) that the readiness for change when it occurred within the leadership at the building level had not only been anticipated, but adequately planned for by those who would be experiencing the change. The concern then evolved into a two-dimensional dynamic because embedded within it lay the critical issue of sustaining building level leadership, in particular, the principalship, which was the heart of this research.

#### The Change in Prestige and Responsibility of the Role of Principal

This segue, which shifts to some extent the focus of the literature base for this study, lent itself to the current view of how leadership development for principals has been addressed. Leadership sustainability in education as well as in the business world has oftentimes been viewed as an event that occurs with nothing more than a bleep on the radar screen. Regardless of how noticeable the event or shift might have been, the occurrence of such a change could prove to be monumental in a school’s success or lack thereof (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006). According to Hargreaves and Goodson (2006), what was viewed as

leadership in education in the 1970s diminished considerably from the bold, well-known fixture within the school and community to the inconspicuous, ladder-climbing supervisor of the 1990s.

The historical context of the principalship traced back to the early 1900s found the administrator charged primarily with the responsibility of directing his attention to the relationship that existed between the school and the values of the family. A few years later, the focus became that of “scientific management of schools” (Grogan & Andrews, 2002, p. 235). By the time of the Second World War, the emphasis had evolved to a focus on the salience of learning in a society upon which democratic principles had been established. The 1950s saw the administrator of a school more in the role of manager and instructional leader than in times past. Unfortunately, with the many social issues of the 1960s and 1970s, their focus once again shifted from the academic side of leadership. The redirection of focus found its emergence in the 1980s with the onslaught of international and national reports on how American students were faring in comparison to students from other countries. Therefore, the focus once again shifted to academic excellence.

In addition to the sobering thought of the decline in perceptive value of the role of principal, Fink and Brayman (2006), in an international study involving western countries, provided statistics delineating the age of building level administrators from 1993-1994. They showed that “37% were older than age 50, 53. 6% between the ages of 40 and 49, and 9.5% age 39 or younger” (p. 63). One statistic documents the attrition rate at 45% to 55% for principals spanning

an 8 year period (Grogan & Andrews, 2002). Contributing factors to the attrition and subsequent shortage of principals, according to Grogan and Andrews (2002), were:

(a) the nature of the job, (b) insufficient salary to warrant the risks and personal time to assume the position, and (c) lack of mobility of candidates to accept jobs that are open. A fourth factor is surely the additional stress of meeting state benchmarks to remain accredited in this era of high stakes testing and accountability. (p. 237)

According to the 1961 publication *The Elementary School Principal*, the leadership focus centered on five areas □ administration, supervision, child guidance, community relations, and administrative team membership. The author placed organization and management at the forefront of his discussion while effective supervision was the fourth topic of discussion (Department of Elementary School Principals, NEA, 1961). A study conducted in 1968 stated “in the future, the quality of elementary education will be linked increasingly to the professional preparation, social vision and consistent courage of the elementary school principals” (Department of Elementary School Principals, NEA, 1968, p. 9). This study, in addressing the occupational desires of its subjects, which were principals, found that the elementary administrators of this era had greater interest in the curriculum and learning aspects of education as opposed to the conventional administrator who was more likely to find himself or herself highly involved with the management, community relations, supervision, and records side of administration.

The results of the 1968 study also found that 82.4% of the sample based success as an administrator at the building level on their classroom experience and the training from actually performing the job. A very small percentage indicated that their college preparation, internship, or in-service activities were contributors. Less than half of the principals surveyed pointed toward professional association programs as being important enough for actual release time during their work day, while 51% indicated that institutes and workshops were of much value toward growing professionally.

Pharis (1966) compared the elementary school principal's need for re-tooling with the obsolescence of trade jobs at the turn of the century. In his description of "human obsolescence," (p.5) he approached his topic not as the elimination of a job but the change or redirection or reconstituting of a job to the point where the current skill set was no longer effective for optimal efficiency. As a result, principals were faced with the responsibility for being developed into leaders by having to learn on the job. However, he stipulated that the idea of change for the elementary school principal would require "competent, scholarly, professional leadership" (p. 7) in order to effectively "read the emotional compass and point the direction" (p. 7) of education. He further stated that "One can be prepared for the principalship in a graduate school or through an internship, but one learns to be a principal only after one becomes a principal" (p. 8). Thus formed the foundation for his push for in-service development in 1966 to promote the following: (a) continued learning, (b) remedial function, (c) keeping pace with change, and (d) increased efficiency of elementary school principals.

In an effort to ascertain a more comprehensive view of intensive leadership development for leaders, an examination of leadership development in the corporate sector is warranted. Since recent reforms in leadership preparation programs in K-12 education have been infused and designed with concepts and competencies grounded in best practices typically found in the fundamental elements of the business sector, taking a closer look into the practices of corporations as they pertain to the development of their leaders is appropriate. The look of leadership development in corporate America, also known for the purpose of this study as intensive leadership development, is both similar and different to that of leadership development in the education realm. Commonality between the corporate and educational arenas can be found in the approaches to organizational leadership. Whether the ideology is rooted in the precepts of classical, human relations, or behavioral science approaches, it is not difficult to see the connectedness that exists (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2000). Therefore, no research effort on leadership development would be robust enough while lacking an incisive view into the corporate sector which is rife with application of the principles of organizational leadership.

#### Leadership Development from the Corporate Perspective

##### *Best Practices*

Twenty years ago, Marsic and Cederholm (1988) addressed the transformational leader and how he or she should be developed in the midst of globalization and the skill set needed to manage and lead in such an environment. They examined the principles of the Management Institute of Lund

(MiL) and how they had been both adopted and adapted to use in the American market. MiL has action learning at its core, which allows leaders to experience situations that have real-life issues and implications as they work to problem-solve and strategize. According to the authors,

Transformation is personal, unique, and social. It is both personal and unique and social. It is personal in that it is the unique understanding of one individual, but social in that this understanding is shaped by organizational cultures which are then examined, interpreted and maintained by these managers. (p. 9)

This model was adapted by the United States and was known as the Institute for Leadership in International Management (LIM).

The examination of leadership development programs from the corporate perspective yielded compelling information. Giber, Carter, and Goldsmith's (2000) study of best practices in leadership development identified vital aspects of their systems for leadership development. The areas determined to be of greatest importance were "competitive and strategic business challenges," "leadership competencies," "most impactful key features of leadership training," "critical success factors," and "evaluation methods" (p. 440). The first critical area to be addressed was competitive and strategic business challenges. The organizations represented in this study highlighted globalization, enhancing efficiency, and placing the spotlight on the consumer as determinants in the establishment of a blueprint for growth initiatives for their leaders. It was further stated that while selection and retention carry considerable weight, they were

both viewed as “direct results” (p. 440) of their development initiatives as opposed to being a tactical element in the overall design of the program.

Rogers and Smith (2004) expressed growing concern regarding the diminished availability of executives who might be able to fill the roles being vacated by premature departures due to retirement or terminations. They advocated a strategy for zeroing in on the high quality leaders not by examining past performance but by scrutinizing the “gap” (p. 52) that exists between being a strong operational leader and one who is exceptional at the strategic level. According to Rogers and Smith (2004), the endeavor to identify quality leaders began with tapping into the talents that currently exist in their own organizations. “It’s about maximizing the likelihood that your sizeable investment in a candidate’s accelerated development will someday yield considerable return on investment when that person becomes a senior leader” (p. 52). The process recommended by these authors was called a “Leadership Blueprint” (p. 53). The four strands through which the process operates are “Leadership Promise,” “Personal Development Orientation,” “Mastery of Complexity,” and “Balance of Values and Results” (p. 53). Leadership Promise taps into the natural leadership skills of an individual. Leadership potential factors embedded within this strand are “propensity to lead,” “bringing out the best in people,” and “authenticity” (p. 53). Receptivity to feedback and learning agility are traits found in the second strand □ personal development orientation. This strand examines an individual’s willingness to look at oneself when making decisions about improvement and growth.



Mastery of Complexity, the third strand, has at its core adaptability and conceptual thinking, and navigates ambiguity. Individuals proficient at this strand demonstrate skill in performing through organizational change and “competing demands” (p. 56). The final strand, Balance of Values and Results, is demonstrated by an individual’s skill at being able to function well within an existing culture while at the same time maintaining or improving output. The leadership factors embedded within this strand were identified as “culture fit” and “passion for results” (p. 57). The authors’ recommendation for finding candidates who possess or demonstrate potential in reference to the traits is to “identify a clear criteria and to develop a well defined, challenging and structural assessment process” (p. 58).

*Soft Skills, Succession Planning, and Global Literacy*

The people at Society for Human Research Management (SHRM) Research supported an approach to the development and growth of leaders that is multi-faceted in its design. They advocated a program’s ability to address not only those operational skills embodied by leaders but those “soft” skills as well. Soft skills, according to the researchers, are defined as “intangible skills” such as “initiative, communication/teamwork, people development/coaching, personal effectiveness/personal mastery, planning and organizing and presentation skills” (Lockwood, 2006, p. 3). They recognized that an integrated approach that allowed for a merging of skill sets to cultivate aspects of leadership development that engenders capacity for an organization.

In addition to recommending a step-by-step process to implement an

integrated solutions approach, SHRM also touted the value of succession planning in an organization. Succession planning, at its core, involves a broad based application in that its presence can be seen in all levels of an organization, the primary focus being that of “finding, assessing, and developing the human capital necessary to accomplish the organization’s strategy. The value of succession planning becomes increasingly visible as predictions for the availability of workers in leadership positions are determined” (Lockwood, 2006, p. 4). It is also important to note that SHRM does not negate the importance of development programs being inclusive of themes that support the personal well-being of its participants.

To address the impact that globalization has had on leadership development, SHRM found the need for a leader being globally minded in the sense that “global literacy” has been acquired. Global literacy is defined as “seeing, thinking, acting, and mobilizing in a culturally minded ways” (Lockwood, 2006, p. 7). A demonstrated competence in “cultural intelligence” was found to be a key aspect of successful international organizations (Lockwood, 2006, p. 7). Cultural intelligence was defined “as the ability to switch national and/or ethnic contexts and quickly learn new patterns of social interaction with appropriate behavioral responses” (Lockwood, 2006, p. 7). Best practices toward the development of global leaders included, but were not limited to, extended tenure in overseas markets, being involved in various functions across the organization, participation in development programs, and international leader development centers. According to a review of studies on leadership development programs,

trends are influenced more and more by global impacts in addition to the increasing attention to soft skills.

Leck and Wang (2004) substantiated the notion that the depth of systemic process in organizations as it pertains to leadership development of middle and senior level leaders is an essential component in determining a leader's effectiveness. They advocated the adherence to "core ideas" (p. 61) in the move toward leadership capacity. Those ideals are identified as (a) "ability to execute strategy" (p. 61), (b) "tapping the power of group learning" (p. 62), (c) "investing in high potential individuals" (p. 64), (d) "capitalizing on career enhancement opportunities" (p. 66), and (e) promoting leaders as teachers" (p. 67). According to the authors, an individual's aptitude for implementing innovation is as valuable as being able to develop the innovation. Possessing the soft skills and being aware of how to effectively utilize them has gained popularity in the business world. "A true leader leverages technical skill and interpersonal acumen to achieve key business objectives" (p. 62), according to Leck and Wang (2004). The value of group learning, the second core idea, can be demonstrated through shared learning experiences, networking opportunities, and increased connectivity in various facets of the organization. Core ideas three – five were linked in that each idea is posited in the principle that human capital is the key to any leadership development initiative. Succession planning, cultivating leaders from the pool of lower-level employees with potential, and utilizing leaders from within the organization to serve as facilitators or teachers were all viewed by Leck and Wang (2004) as strategies for the establishing of leadership capacity.

The soft skills focus was the theme for Bunker and Wakefield's article (2004). They provided a case for the need of "emotional intelligence," (p. 18) in particular, as critical leadership positions become entangled, increasingly in the turbulence that is accompanying the trying times faced by organizations. "Difficult times and constant transition trigger the need for reframing of leadership capacities" (p. 19), according to the authors. The addressing of this need can occur via a thorough examination of leadership competencies. Identifying and strategically confronting what has become off-balanced in an effort to become stabilized is the goal. It is likened to a bicycle wheel being "out of true" (p. 19). Accurately redistributing the tension so that optimal performance can be obtained, according to the authors, can be viewed as a leader taking steps toward development of emotional sensibilities in his or her journey toward authentic leadership as the fight between competing competencies rages within a leader during tumultuous times, not to mention having the courage to allow oneself to evolve beyond the parameters of traditional leadership competencies. These are both bold and oftentimes inconspicuous moves toward becoming more authentic in the leadership role.

Nissley's (2007) view on the merging of concepts of creativity and innovation was the focus of this series of Leadership in Action's In Focus segment. He contended that one without the other, in leadership development paradigms, will not allow organizations to effectively tap into their capacity to navigate change. He referenced the Banff Centre as an example of the integration of "artistic processes" (p. 22) in the programs established for the

development of leaders. Wilson (2005) advocated the process of developing leaders via career mapping. With its roots in commitment to guide vision development and “milestones” (p. 24), organizations can be effective in perpetuating a culture of individual, and, subsequently, company success.

Wilson (2007) examined a study conducted by the Ashridge Centre for Business in Society and the European Academy of Business in Society that addressed the “reflexive abilities necessary for responsible leadership” (p. 8). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has reflexive abilities as one of its core dynamics. In collaboration with leadership qualities and management skills, the factor of reflexive abilities is key to the idea of developing leaders who are able to effectively generalize the dynamic of CSR into practical, applicable status. Reflexive abilities are described as “core characteristics of responsible behavior and are made up of a mixture of skills, attitudes, and knowledge sets” (p. 8). They are “considered the key competencies required to integrate social and environmental considerations into core business decision making” (p. 8). The study, which combined a quantitative and qualitative approach, focused on five reflexive abilities, systemic thinking, embracing diversity, balancing local and global perspectives, meaningful dialogue, and emotional awareness. Subjects expressed that greater depth of knowledge is necessary as systemic processes are examined. That depth should be inclusive of the internal relationships as well as those that are external, with the external component addressing “social, economic, environmental, and cultural dynamics” (p. 8), according to Wilson. Having the skill and awareness to make meaning of another’s actions in addition

to the insight to return constructive feedback is necessary..

Addressing the issue of diversity, the subjects decried the idea of homogeneity to deal with matters. Rather, they supported a move that would welcome diversity in the effort to establish connectivity. Those interviewed also shared the concept that whatever occurred on the home stage has an effect on global outcomes; their position on communication that is deemed meaningful was that engaging communication would evolve to the degree that decision making would be generated from a “process of dialogue, deciding, and implementing” (Wilson, 2007, p. 9). Participants also addressed a sense of emotional intelligence that reflected the human and more sensitive side of leadership and decision making.

Day and O'Connor (2006) discussed specific leadership perspectives that were aimed at determining which was more effective at helping an organization have the endurance necessary for success. The models examined were leadership by one, hierarchical leadership, pipeline leadership and collective leadership. Of the four models addressed, pipeline leadership, singularly focused on developing “bench strength” (p. 9) in an organization. This focus allowed for leaders from within the organization who have been developed and are awaiting opportunities for promotion to arise within the company. The collective approach aimed to foster positive, useful interactions within the organization among individuals and groups.

The value of succession planning in an organization was examined in Success Factors, Inc. Enterprise Insight Series. Day and O'Connor (2006)

contended that with a succession planning program in place, companies create for themselves the position of having knowledge of existing bench strength for key roles. “Effective succession planning translates to a definitive plan – and reassurance – that your organization can dramatically reduce the effort to replace a key contributor by literally having the right replacement strategically engaged and ready to step in” (p. 5).

### *Best Practice Organizations*

Day and Halpin (2001), in a joint study on leadership development best practices sponsored by Penn State University and the U. S. Army Research Institute, found that in addition to being holistic in approach, development of bench strength and integrity to implementation was imperative to effectiveness. The practices deemed most favorable as identified within this study were “formal programs, 360 degree feedback, coaching, job assignments, mentoring, networks, reflection, action learning and outdoor challenge” (p. 2).

However, the authors discussed the movement toward developing programs for leadership development that demonstrated predilection for more tailored specifications as opposed to the more traditional practices or those favorable practices implemented isolation. They found that organizations of focus for this study explored strategies that would allow for the design and implementation of an unambiguous content rich program germane to the issues faced by the organizations represented in this study. By instituting a process for development based upon this premise, the likelihood for transfer of learning targets or competencies increased. The authors contended that:

a desirable feature of any leadership development program practice is that it is oriented toward future leadership competencies. Simply compiling lists of current knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for success is a recipe for obsolescence. That is one reason why the move toward leadership competencies is so popular. The very word “competencies” is more future-oriented than knowledge, skills and abilities. However, the importance is not in terms of what label is used, but how the competencies help drive the development of desired behaviors and values. (Day and Halpin, 2001, p. 11)

The companies of focus in this study were General Electric, Motorola, PepsiCo, Federal Express, and Johnson and Johnson.

Giber, Carter, and Goldsmith (2000) analyzed the best practices of 15 organizations; among them were Allied Signal, Colgate-Palmolive, IMASCO Limited, and PECO Energy. AlliedSignal at the time of the publication of this book was categorized as a global company that provided “aerospace and automotive products” as well as “chemicals, fibers, and advanced materials” (p. 39). It utilized, as its leadership development initiative, the Management Resource Review Process (MRR) to determine the leadership potential of its people. It is an amalgam of two processes, administration of the performance and career development components. The objects included, but were not limited to, “assessing key individuals regarding results, behaviors, and potential; evaluating current depth of succession talent; and identifying high-potential and promotable talent and plans for development and movement” (p. 40).



The progression of the performance and development components allowed for the merging of on-going circular processes of employees and the organization. Employees went through the phases of “assessment, goal setting, planning discussion between employee and manager, action, and measurement” (Giber et al., 2000, p. 41). The organization’s re-design and implementation of the 360 degree Multi-Source Feedback (MSF) Program was also critical in its system for evaluation and feedback. An endorsement from the company’s chief executive officer reads as follows:

At AlliedSignal, effective MSF stands as evidence of our commitment to improving and developing the abilities of all employees. Moreover, it reflects a true team environment, one in which leaders stand not in judgment of subordinates’ performance, but rather act as partners so we effectively build on our strengths and eliminate weaknesses to become better leaders and more capable team members. (p. 45)

AlliedSignal, the parent company, merged with Honeywell Inc. in 1999 and assumed the name Honeywell (Business Wire, 1999). The company continues to operate as a strong contender in both domestic and global markets (Honeywell, 2007).

Colgate-Palmolive is a company that provides consumers world-wide with a variety of products aimed at meeting one’s personal and household needs. The researchers focused their attention for the purpose of this study on the initiative for training leaders on the global stage. The organization’s primary tenets that undergird its efforts to build and sustain leadership capacity is to

“identify high potentials early, assign sequence of challenging work, provide constructive feedback and coaching, and offer continuous learning opportunities” (Giber, Carter, & Goldsmith, 2000, p. 208). Its initiative for the global efforts at leadership development involved examining the challenges faced by both its customers and organization, nascent inclinations in the global retail marketplace, issues that had the propensity to develop as a result of the trends, its strategy for sales in the global market, and the people for whom the initiative was targeted (Giber et al., 2000).

Imasco Limited is a composite of companies that provides for the retailing of products to consumers in the form of tobacco, fast-food, financial services, and land development (Giber et al., 2000; Sourcewatch, 2009). It took on the challenge of implementing a leadership development initiative “designed to develop the strategic thinking capabilities of senior and middle management (Giber et al., 2000, p. 258). Their approach to meeting this challenge was rooted in action learning. By availing itself to the dynamics of action learning, Imasco Limited positioned itself for active, engaging, experiential learning by its employee leaders. This paradigm allowed for group output whose results could be manifested through the inherent benefits of relationship as they worked to problem-solve and showcase exhibitions of their learning outcomes. This was critical when one considered the objectives of Imasco’s senior management development program, which were identified as “developing general management and strategic skill, exposing participants to the principles and philosophy of the company, and identifying and accelerating the development of

the companies' high potential managers" (Giber et al., 2000, p. 262).

PECO Energy Company, identified as a leader in the realm of electricity provision in America, was faced with many changes within the business. The changes involved such issues as "deregulation," "attempts to unionize," "a complete reengineering of the human resource function, changes in its core values and beliefs, and changes in key personnel at the senior management level of the company" (Giber et al., 2000, p. 368). The organization's focus for leadership development involved a process of selection by nomination and ongoing support via coaching. The initiative's objectives were identification of the competencies necessary for competing in today's market; developing an organized and strategic identification and development plan to build the "leadership bench" (p. 369); categorization of assets and deficits of existing leadership by instituting a non-biased agency to facilitate the process; and the formation, as well as the carrying out of strategies to decrease the "leadership requirement gaps" (p. 369).

PECO's respective three levels for managing their leadership challenge were early insights, junior and mid-level management, and upper-middle level management. Assessment centers served different purposes for each of the levels. The level 2 and 3 centers' objectives narrowed the focus to the potential for leadership and the development of plans to address strengths and weaknesses. A benefit of this method for developing leaders, according to the researchers of this study, was the depth of knowledge that was made available to the participants and company. It subsequently led to the filtering of programs

through these processes to better determine the “bench strength which will ultimately result in the development of plans of action for strengthening of leadership on a global scale” (Giber et al., 2000, p. 377).

The participants of the Giber et al. (2000) study were asked to provide input on major aspects of their system for cultivating and harvesting their leadership potential as it pertained to the mechanisms currently in place within their respective organizations. Those areas were competitive and strategic business challenges, leadership competencies, most impactful key features of leadership training, critical success factors, and evaluation methods.

When asked to respond to the factors that most impacted their “leadership development initiative, the feedback revolved around the topics of globalization, output efficiency, sustaining competitiveness, and consumer satisfaction” (Giber et al., 2000, p. 440). According to Giber et al. (2000), while employee selection and retention were of concern, the impact on both with regard to the programs in place for leadership development was not a driving element. The information ascertained on the leadership competencies upon which their initiatives were established identified the concepts of developing group dynamics, the depth of knowledge of business acumen, and level of innovation. It is important to note that while there has been an emergence of concern regarding a leader’s emotional readiness, emotional intelligence was found to have the least degree of importance of all the competencies that were identified.

The input provided by the respondents in reference to the favored components of the initiative included, in order of preference, action learning, 360-

degree feedback, exposure to senior executives, and exposure to the strategic agenda. The critical success factors recognized by the respondents as vital were, in order of preference, active participation of senior leaders to the degree that the leadership potential of promising individuals is shored up and that those providing the guidance become “co-designers,” “facilitators,” and “champions” (Giber et al., 2000, p. 444) of the initiative, consistent, on-going assessment, and a cohesive connectivity to the initiative’s blueprint for successful implementation.

In regard to evaluation, the respondents spoke to the method for gathering the various forms of data to be utilized for this purpose. They used what was referred to as “reaction evaluations” (Giber et al., 2000 p. 445). Reaction evaluations allowed for the gathering of data from a participant’s initial feedback from training. They also favored “behavior evaluations” (p. 445) which examined how the development impacted performance, and “results evaluations” which examined how the initiative impacted the ability to meet goals established by the organization.

#### *Expense of Leadership Development Initiatives*

When examining the expense associated with the initiatives implemented by these organizations, the investment was in excess of one million dollars for 47% of the organizations involved in this study, 33% of the participants invested between \$100,000 and \$750,000, while 13% were recorded as having invested less than \$100,000 (Giber et al., 2000).

They also provided the following description of the current status of leadership development initiatives in which a provocative look into where current

trend based upon the data collected from this research will take future efforts in the area of developing leaders.

Organizations are committing to education and training that deepen the specific skills, perspective, and competencies they expect of their current and emerging leaders. By combining [the various methods for acquiring feedback in their] leadership [development] initiatives, [they] are successfully building teams of leaders who see both the forest and the trees, [leaders] who [have the capacity to] understand their customers' demands today and drive strategy and action to anticipate their demands tomorrow. The next two decades promise further innovation, integration, and investment in inhouse leadership education; as leadership at all levels grows more critical, so will the systems for leadership development.

(Giber et al., 2000, p. 447)

Literature, including some referenced in this review, supported the relationship that exists between leadership practices in education and business. It supported the ideals of utilizing sound practices in design and implementation of competencies and strategies, relationship building, and decision making with a focus on yielding an organization's desired outcomes for growth and sustainability. Because the goals of education, since the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in 2001, do have a focus on the development of leaders, especially principals, principal leadership has emerged as a pinnacle of the move toward reforming schools. Therefore, the final section of this review of literature will address the relationship between

leadership development and school reform (U. S. Department of Education, 2006).

## Leadership Development and School Reform

### *Organizational Learning and Leadership Capacity*

The role of the principal has been catapulted onto the center stage. It has become increasingly difficult in this day of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) to separate the leader of the school from the academic and socio-cultural goings-on within the school (Buck, Arterbury, Jones, & Crawford, 2006-2007). Therefore, it is imperative that principals as well as assistant principals and all other individuals classified as building level leaders be provided with consistent and effective support in the form of leadership development for the expressed purpose of “sharpening the saw” (Covey, 1989, p. 287). According to Grogan and Andrews (2002),

the most important obligation is to create good schools. By creating good schools, we mean that we use what we know about learning and professional practice to develop the structure of relationships within classrooms, schools, and school districts so that the human energy in schools is transformed into desired student academic and social growth. (p. 234)

According to Leithwood and Aitken (1995), organizational learning which is inclusive of individual learning is critical to the functioning of “cognitive systems” (p. 34) which acts as a conduit for perception, understanding, storage, and retrieval of data. The cognitive systems invoke the strategies for learning

that are undergirded by trial and error, the practice of others, and duplicating the actions taken by brother or sister organizations. Lambert (2003), in her research on leadership capacity, stated that “learning and leading are deeply intertwined, and we need to regard each other as worthy of attention, caring, and involvement if we are to learn together. Indeed, leadership can be understood as reciprocal, purposeful learning in a community” (p. 2).

Phillip Schlechty (2008), director of the Schlechty Center for Leadership in School Reform, embraced the concept of capacity building for transforming school systems. The center uses its resources to assess an educational system’s “capacity to improve performance” (p. 5). He asserted that organizations have the daunting responsibility to not only see the present issues it may be facing, but to ascertain what lies ahead in the on-going endeavor of navigating change. It is his position that districts or organizations who have moved to take serious steps to visualize the future while coupling it with deliberate measures to bring the desired outcome to pass have found a way to effectively keep the “developmental needs” of the district or organization paramount to its “maintenance needs” (p. 6). This balance of perspective was maintained by the organization without relinquishing the necessary hold on either of these critical factors. He also cautions that, while resistance is inevitable and oftentimes labeled as unsuccessful when navigating the improvement effort, it is sometimes an indication that the initiative is simply drawing out those effects that were, for all sense and purposes, supposed to be exposed as a result of the processes being implemented. This premise is supported by the concept of



systems thinking in that by creating a ripple effect, a premeditated consequence was revealed, thereby presenting the opportunity to address the system interaction that was once not known to exist by leaders (Razik & Swanson, 1995). It therefore becomes the responsibility of those involved to do an effective job at implementing the defined measures in the midst of the field of debris that will likely arise in the process. Being able to utilize capacity standards to galvanize an organization's improvement efforts, according to Schlechty (2002), is the organization's most probable avenue toward significant performance improvement. Thusly, the capacity standards, building from what Schlechty identified as the business of schools, which at its core is engagement and content, are shored up through rigorous and relevant development of its leaders. The capacity standard "developing structures for participatory leadership" (Schlechty, 2002, p. 47) addresses the system that undergirds leadership development initiatives of a school or district. Having become adept at the systematizing of this capacity standard demonstrates a districts evolution toward the provision of continuous development opportunities that prepare those currently charged with the responsibility of leadership in schools and districts as well as those who have been identified as possessing potential for future leadership endeavors.

#### *Twenty-One Traits/Responsibilities of School Leaders*

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) offered research-based support of the impact that effective and sustainable leadership can have on student achievement. In their study, they identified 21 responsibilities of school leaders

that were essential to the “effective execution” of building level leadership (p. 64). The implications of the study by Marzano et al. (2005) delve into the process of change in that the identified responsibilities are inextricably intertwined with what they describe as first and second order change. According to the authors, the means by which individuals choose to move an organization into a change effort may not correspond with the “order of change” necessary for that effort to be viable and will subsequently result in a malfunction of that effort (p. 66).

While first order change focuses on a step-by-step adjustment of a system, second order change requires something different, more complex. Second order change will seek to produce change which will likely result in fundamentally shifting the way in which an organization may be headed because of new or different ways of “thinking and acting” (Marzano et.al, 2005, p. 66). Although all 21 responsibilities of leadership are significant to first order change, three critical responsibilities (a) knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment, (b) monitoring and evaluation, and (c) ideals and beliefs, rank in the top 10 of responsibilities central to second order change. It is important to note that a few responsibilities ranking high in regard to value to second order change, change agent, flexibility, and optimizer, ranked low in regard to first order change. In addition, the responsibilities identified as culture, communication, order, and input were described as being “negatively affected by second order change” (p.73). In fact, a more specific description was that these responsibilities could be perceived as being in a state of deterioration because of a second order change innovation.

Therefore, Marzano et al. (2005) proposed that school leaders grasp the understanding that prior to any breakthrough, one often experiences times of nebulosity, subsequently, requiring school leaders to function during times of distress from staff within the organization and more often than not leading to unsuccessful innovations that were originally intended to yield successful outcomes with regard to improved student achievement. According to Elmore (2003), ineffective performance of schools is more so a function of decision-making rather than the diligence demonstrated by the stakeholders in them. Marzano et al. (2005) proposed that in an effort to design programming that is “specific to the needs and context of the school” (p. 84), designers must aim to develop approaches that are site specific. Because research in the context of curricular needs has supported the use of feedback as a means of lighting the path to effectiveness in program design and implementation, it can also be a tool utilized in other sectors within the educational domain, in particular and for the purpose of this research, professional development for administrators.

#### *Recruitment and Induction*

In Schlechty’s (2005) analysis of social systems, six were identified and discussed as significant. Recruitment and induction stands out as the system most aligned with leadership development. According to Schlechty (2005), “creating an effective induction system is one of the most important and highest-leverage activities a leader can engage in” (p. 67). It can be ascertained from Schlechty’s position that viable systems for selecting, recruiting, and retaining employees in an organization promote the propensity for it to guarantee the

understanding the components necessary for its effectiveness, the components that he refers to as norms, aptitude for the job, and longevity. One benefit of a feasible system can be demonstrated through the adeptness of a leader's ability to engender those he or she leads with support and the opportunity to engage in realistic situations and experiences with the needed capacity to work through whatever issues unfold at the onset of assuming responsibility for the position. Schlechty (2005) asseverated that an organization's means to implement the pieces of the recruitment and induction system that would lead to the cultivation and establishing of capacity building for the organization is key. He further contended that "changes in the external environment can reshape internal needs" (p. 71). Therefore, what has been done with school leaders at the building level, with regard to the system of recruitment and induction, is lacking. A vital part of the system requires a look at the in-house talent and what, if any, opportunity for leadership development they were afforded. The model for improvement supported by Schlechty's (2005), research supports a process of induction that is on-going where the development extends beyond initial obligatory and disjointed trainings and workshops.

In Leithwood and Aitken's (1995) examination of organizational learning in *Making Schools Smarter*, they maintained that while organizations have cognitive systems for learning, the reality that individual learning within an organization still occurs holds true. In fact, the authors asserted that individual learning can occur in the absence of organizational learning. Since cognitive systems within organizations allow for perception, understanding, storage, and retrieval of

information which oftentimes does not happen, it can be of no surprise when attempts at organizational restructuring are impeded with various obstacles. Hence, the necessity for the understanding of what Leithwood and Aitken (1995) identified as three strategies for learning in navigating the way through and around obstacles. The first strategy, “trial and error,” is rooted in the experience of individuals within the organization (p. 34). The second strategy, “accepting others’ experience,” evolves from the engendering of ideas from outside of the organization (p. 34). The third strategy, “imitating the behaviors of other organizations,” is demonstrated in the ability of school employees to replicate what has been observed of other organizations (p. 35).

In consideration of school level operations, with regard to organizational learning, Leithwood and Aitken’s (1995) notion that “a school’s long-term memory is often heavily dependent on its staff’s tacit knowledge, something easily lost in the face of significant staff turnover” (p. 35) added weight to the need for review of intensive leadership development for school level administrators.

#### *Leadership Development Initiatives: Vital Artery to Sustainability*

Educators’ concerns with many of the attempted passes at providing professional development vowing to allow leaders to sharpen their respective saws included, but were not limited to, ineffective planning and implementation in addition to failure on the part of program designers to solidify support from key players within school systems (Petzko, 2004). “What then,” one might ask, would constitute effective leadership during a time when the role of principal is on a persistent journey through the continuum of change; furthermore, how can

professional development ever catch up with the fast pace of that change? In an exhaustive review of what was recognized as effective leadership in elementary and middle schools, based on Blue Ribbon schools in the United States, there was an absence of specifications in any formulaic fashion outlining what the principal must do to be an effective leader (Ogden & Germinario, 1994).

However, there was the strong assertion that at the nucleus of thriving schools stood effective principals. So then, to reframe the previously stated question, what would constitute effective leaders, a second question arises, what constitutes effective development of school level leaders?

Hirsh (2002) urged educational leaders to carefully consider staff development of their school leaders. She recommended the professional development require of leaders the ability to strategically direct continuous academic growth. In examining the goals for professional development for school leaders, careful and consistent review is necessitated by the desire for ensuring optimum levels of performance by its stakeholders. According to Elmore (2002), the mechanism by which to improve a school is through an investment in those who are employed therein. Elmore (2002) asserted that the professional growth of administrators has in times past been based upon the amassing of credit through college courses which in some instances may not be what is needed for that individual in his or her given place of employment. Elmore (2002) contended that because of the plane on which the accountability wheel in regard to education rolls, in its lack of “structures or processes” (p. 3) which could truly support administrators, schools have inevitably become

“inhospitable places for learning” (p. 3). The environment is not only hostile for the adults, but for the children as well. The solution for this accountability conundrum lies in the need for “reciprocity of accountability for capacity” (p. 3). This, according to Elmore (2002), will set the stage for the powers that be to provide an avenue by which the requirement for improved performance is matched by the provision of a feasible vehicle for meeting the desired growth requirement. Conversely, the investment made into the skill and knowledge acquisition of an administrator or teacher necessitates the condition for improvement in performance.

Dennis Sparks (2000), of the National Staff Development Council, supported the move to propel professional development for principals beyond the familiar realm of passivity. He described leadership development for principals as the “neglected stepchild of state and district professional development efforts” (p. 2). Dufour (2001) advocated the creation of an appropriate context for learning. His proposition that school-level administrators become students of the teaching-learning process is critical to that of the leadership piece with regard to the growth and development of principals.

If teaching is to improve, it is critical that the opportunities for the principals and teachers be developed professionally and continuously provided. Their knowledge and understanding of relevant best practices in the field is crucial for ongoing improvement and sustainability (Killion, 2002). In her study on results-based professional development in elementary schools as a means of improving student achievement, Killion (2002) identified the limitation that even

with the increase in research available, the question still looms as to whether or not the relationship between the two is a cause-effect relationship.

The Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) team instituted a professional development series that aimed to move principals toward being more effective managers of change and developers of “purposeful community” and to select the “right focus for school change initiatives” (Kilmer & Halverson, 2006-2007, p. 5). This opportunity for professional growth utilized as a foundation *School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results* by Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005). The drive for the research was to determine how principals put into practice what they learned regarding the change initiatives and how that application impacted the achievement level of their students.

Jones and Hooper (2006-2007) identified tactics aimed at addressing the labor of the educational researcher to clarify meaningful leadership. They asserted that by empowering the principal as an agent of change, he or she moves well beyond the familiar role of manager to that of facilitator of the “teaching and learning process” (p. 27). Operating in this role, subsequently, will lead the principal toward an openness to capitalize on the talent within his or her building. The role further requires that the administrator become efficient at distribution of human and material resources in addition to the implementation of learning communities as essential vehicles in the push for sustainable improvement. Jones and Hooper (2006-2007) contended that developing something that can be sustained with positive results over a given period of time



is of necessity in the development of effective leadership. In some cases, the creations of roles for individuals to serve as “turnaround specialists” (Colvin, 2007, p.10) have taken hold in various locations across the country. However, Colvin (2007) asserted that more, considerably more, is necessary to bring about significant change. He contended that the role the local education agency has in the process must be authentic and not exist in a state of continuous dysfunction.

Colvin (2007) lent a hint of soberness to leaders about the reality of the pace of change. As with most authentic reform measures, positive results are often not manifested prior to the third year of the reform. With that stated, some leaders in education have gone to the measure of addressing the development of “resilience” in principals (p. 11). Some of the reform efforts noted by Colvin (2007) include an initiative by the country of Singapore used to select and develop its school leaders. The efforts of Mississippi with regard to realignment of standards and New York City’s Leadership Academy incentive initiative were highlighted as beacons for authentic reform in leadership development.

According to Hughes (2005), many professions take time to ensure the sanctity of their crafts much more so than educators. Rigor has been a quality that permeated the training of other professions, while remaining consistently absent from education. Hughes (2005) supports the implementation of a rigorous model developed by the National Institute for School Leadership that would provide the type of training that is intense and on-going for a period of 18 to 24 months. Evans and Mohr (1999), in an examination of the Annenberg Principles, stated that professional development for principals must refrain from

the traditional methods usually employed. Programs must require principals to venture beyond comfort into an environment that would lead them to think about their own learning, which is not always a place of comfort. They also supported the use of reflective practices in addition to group work and democratic learning with an infusion of rigor as they work to advance principals toward transformation.

The Harvard Principals' Center Institutes, established by Roland Barth, offered participants professional development opportunities for principals at various points in their career, gained traction in Mississippi during the 1990's through support from The Phil Hardin Foundation supported practicing principals in Mississippi through their Ward Fellows Program. The foundation provided principals and assistant principals with the opportunity to compete for one of the fellowships offered through this program (The Principals' Center, 2006; The Phil Hardin Foundation, 2006). The program sponsored principals and assistant principals' participation in one of the Harvard Principals' Center Institutes conducted during the summer. The Millsaps Principals' Institute, also focused on providing principals and assistant principals with professional development for instructional leadership support was born out of the Harvard's Principals' Center Institutes in the early 1990's (Millsaps College Principals' Institute, 2001 & 2011).

The state of Mississippi's School Executive Membership Institute (SEMI) required development of its new leaders through Orientation for School Leaders (OSL). It is used by to induct new school level leaders. Orientation of School Leaders (OSL), addressed four strands. The strands Leadership Development,

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, School Improvement, and Improving Student Achievement were addressed (Mississippi Department of Education, 2011).

The National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) was introduced to the state of Mississippi in 2006 as part of a leadership initiative at the University of Mississippi. It was the program used carryout the goals and objectives of the Orientation for School Leaders Program provided through the state of Mississippi for the development of its new leaders in educational administration as new principals and school administrators worked toward meeting the intent set forth through the School Executive Leadership Institute (Mississippi Department of Education, 2006; National Institute for School Leadership, 2011).

In addressing the changing role of the principal, Fenwick and Pierce (2002) acknowledged the complex nature of school systems. Consequently, they advocated support for principals' need of growth opportunities that will propel them toward lasting improvement. Three approaches utilized in recent times in the arena of educational leadership were the Craft Model, Reflective Inquiry Approach, and Principal Centers. According to Fenwick and Pierce:

Successful professional development takes time. Principals, just like their teachers, benefit from professional development that examines best practices, provides coaching support, encourages risk-taking designed to improve student learning, cultivates team relationships and provides quality time for reflections and renewal. (p. 5)

To further substantiate Fenwick and Pierce's (2002) stance, Petzko (2004)

contended that induction and mentorship programs with high levels of involvement from mentor principals was a significant means by which greater success of professional development programs for novice principals could be attained. In California, a mentoring program aimed at providing support for Latino principals and school leaders has been implemented as a means to sustain success on the job (Magdaleno, 2006).

Phillip Schlechty (2002), founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Center for Leadership in Reform, tackled change that leads to improvement in his book *Working on the Work*. He addressed the familiar modus operandi of many school districts to motivate learners with methods or measures that have no sustainable improvement value. With the fundamental principle that, whether teacher, principal, or superintendent, “the primary function of a leader is to inspire others to do things they might otherwise not do and encourage others to go in directions they might not otherwise pursue” (p. xx), Schlechty (2002) delved into the arena of school improvement with the spotlight on the role leadership has in implementing and authenticating engagement. So, based upon the premise that engagement is the key to sustainable improvement, “assumptions” (p. xvii) were derived that focused on undertakings that those who were responsible for the delivery of instruction in schools and districts will need to assume in order to create the culture of engaged learning supported by his research.

Schlechty (2002) acknowledged the need for support held by principals. He stated that:

The key to the survival of public education in America is the development

of a cadre of school leaders who have a clear grasp of the purpose of schools ensuring that every child, every day, is provided with engaging work to do that results in the child's learning something that is important to the child and to the continuation of the culture. Leaders also must be skilled in creating conditions in the systems they lead (schools and school districts) that support the changes needed to enable the schools to serve their purpose. (pp. 52-53)

Fullan (2001) reiterated the issue of the ineffective development of school administrators as being one that is systemic in nature. He stated that the process of identifying, attracting, and sustaining potential leaders in schools will require reform. In addition, Fullan (2001) stressed that the reformation will require application of individual development, organizational development, as well as measures geared toward addressing the warring effect of fragmentation that ensues when various pieces of the puzzles commence in unison toward the goal of "program coherence" (p. 146). With regard to the development of school leaders, Fullan (2001) affirmed that their effectiveness is related to the ability of the next level of decision makers to "make it possible for them to develop the capacities to do the job, and to align other policies to make the job possible and rewarding" (p. 261).

When developing professional development programs for principals with the goals of nurturing and retention, Peterson (2002) recommended that the programs have a design similar to those addressed by Hughes (2005) and Fenwick and Pierce (2002). Peterson (2002) supported the need for both

structural and cultural components in any program design. He then provided a description of many professional development programs aimed at meeting the needs of today's principal, many of which were similar to the models upon which the current research was based.

Schlechty (2002), while providing some credence to the overwhelming nature of the work that a principal encounters today, while at the same time conveying a message that allows educators and policy makers to contemplate the necessity and urgency upon which high-quality intensive professional development programs rests, leaves the reader with this thought about the options available to existing and potential principals:

Complain about being overwhelmed, and cope with the situation until retirement. Quit now, and take a less stressful job. Work with others to redefine the role of principal so that the job can be done by ordinary men and women and so that what is done will have optimal positive effects on the lives of children, as well as on the lives of all who work in and around the school. (p. 64)

### Summary

Senge's (1990) work on systems thinking and the significance of such a paradigm shift to an organization was used as a fundamental part of the theoretical framework for this study. In addition, Bolman and Deal's (2003) study of best practice organizations that were successful in demonstrating sustainability by reframing specific approaches that would create the atmosphere and climate for perpetuation was selected as a critical piece of the theoretical

base for this study. Bass's (1997) work on transformational leadership was essential in its role as the connector for intertwining the work of Senge (1990) and Bolman and Deal (2003). Their research served as the infrastructure of the work undertaken by various entities to develop vehicles for the provision effective high-quality leadership development programs that work to propagate high levels of growth and productivity. The principles of systems thinking, reframing approaches to fostering sustainability, and transformational thinking resonate throughout educational policies, at all levels, and thusly impact student learning in P-12 settings.

In today's academic climate, the heightened stage to which expectations for principals have emerged is somewhat staggering. From heroic managerial figure to accountable instructional leader, he or she is faced daily with a level of decision making that requires the depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding not readily accessible by many in the field (Grogan & Andrews, 2002). The transformational leader, according to Marzano et al. (2005), can be found in this place, the place where having the aptitude to consistently and effectively demonstrate leadership in a multitude of contexts. The study on school leadership conducted by Davis et al. (2005) identified numerous abilities in which today's school-based leader must navigate. By comparison, the climate of the corporate sector traditionally lends itself to developing leaders. To operate effectively, schools and districts are now finding business strategies as methods by which they may need to operate. Businesses have been found to implement initiatives that go beyond hiring. One initiative for developing leaders, the

Leadership Blueprint, focused on longevity via the designing of strands that address areas deemed critical to current and future success (Rogers & Smith, 2004). Other organizations chose to focus on the areas of soft skills, succession planning, and even global literacy as vital components to their leadership development initiatives (Lockwood, 2006; Leck & Wang, 2004; Bunker & Wakefield, 2004). Allied Signal, Colgate-Palmolive, IMASCO Limited, and PECO Energy were examined and identified as companies that effectively demonstrated sound practice in the development of its leaders through strategies such as 360 Multi-Source Feedback, leading on a global stage, action learning, targeting leadership potential, and on-going coaching (Giber et al., 2000).

Liethwood and Aiken's (1995) examination of cognitive systems provided credence to the idea that one's learning or growth is a lifeline to the execution of an organization's cognitive system. The importance of building leadership capacity was addressed by Schlechty (2005) through a district's responsibility to examine its social systems, namely, for the purpose of this research, its recruitment and induction system. It was also addressed by Marzano et al., (2005) through their examination of the 21 responsibilities of school leaders. In addition, they evaluated the impact that levels in the process of change had on the ranking of the 21 responsibilities.

Ranging from poor design to lack of consistency in the effort to monitor and evaluate effectiveness, the literature in educational leadership is replete with the identified shortcomings of Intensive Leadership Development Programs (Petzko, 2004). In addition, while a minimal amount of literature documented



financial investments in leadership development initiatives upwards of one million dollars in the corporate realm, there is an absence of literature available on expenditures associated with these type of programs in educational circles (Giber et al., 2000). Nevertheless, districts, state agencies, and colleges and universities continue to work to remedy the problem through endeavors promoted by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, the National Staff Development Council, Stanford University, the Mid-continent Research for Education (McREL) team, and many others. Connors (2000) perhaps synthesized the value of leadership development of leaders best in asserting that growing people happens when opportunities for them to grow occurs by the presentation of and acquiring of “relevant, practical, and useful guidance” (p. 137).

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

Chapter III provides a thorough description of the process used to conduct this study on the sustainability of principals. To obtain information, data were collected on basic demographics, the types of Intensive Leadership Development Programs that participants have attended, their beliefs about the reported value of the programs to their district leadership, the growth and belief about promotion potential for those who participate in these type programs, and the effects of participation in these programs on intent to persist in the position of principal.

#### Participants

Subjects consisted of 365 practicing building and district-level administrators (assistant principals, principals, directors, assistant superintendents, and superintendents) in the state of Mississippi. Subjects received a questionnaire by mail to complete and return. The instrument was developed by the researcher through consultation with a focus group of school leaders made up of a superintendent, an assistant superintendent, directors, and principals employed by a small school district on the Mississippi Gulf Coast to gather quantitative data that addressed principal sustainability and intent to persist in the position of principal.

#### Procedures

The process for data collection for the research study involved sending, by mail, a blank copy of the questionnaire and a stamped, pre-addressed envelope

to 365 randomly selected district and school level administrators in the state of Mississippi. Based on the number of questionnaires returned, a request, by e-mail was made to all 365 randomly selected participants to forward the questionnaire by mail if it had not been submitted. The amount of time estimated by the researcher to complete the instrument was 25 minutes. The risks of participating in this study were minimal. By submitting the questionnaire, permission was given for participation; participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. No subject's identity was obtained to correspond with a returned questionnaire. A letter enclosed with the questionnaire informed the subject that by returning the completed instrument he or she was giving consent to participate. This letter included the information (what, how long, confidentiality, anonymity, dissemination, etcetera) needed for the individual to determine whether or not he or she wanted to participate.

#### Instrumentation

The development of the instrument, The Intensive Leadership Development Questionnaire, evolved from a Research and Foundations course in which the instrument was piloted utilizing principals, assistant principals, and lead teachers who were not part of the subsequent focus group used to develop the instrument. The piloting group represented a small school district located on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The focus group consisted of a group of certified district level administrators, principals, and lead teachers from a small school district located on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. During the process, all members of the focus group were provided with a copy of the draft questionnaire and a

synopsis of the project. Upon conclusion of the discussion, further development and modifications were made to the draft instrument in preparation for distribution to the pilot group. The feedback from the data analysis of the results from pilot group resulted in the final product, The Intensive Leadership Development Questionnaire, for use in this study. The instrument consisted of 59 questions that addressed eight constructs in addition to demographic information which included participation in different types of leadership programs. The constructs addressed by the questionnaire were intent, contribution, commitment, requirements, support, use, value, and beliefs. The constructs were defined for the purpose of this study as follows: *intent* – focus on one’s intent to persist in the position; *contribution* – focus on the contribution from having participated in a leadership development program; *commitment* – focus on one’s commitment after having participated; *requirements* – focus on requirements associated with participation; *support* – focus on the support that participants receive; *use* – focus on one’s use of information learned from participation; *value* – focus on the value of participation; and *beliefs* – focus on one’s beliefs about participation. The number of items on the questionnaire that each construct was comprised of was: use -11, contribution -10, value - seven, support - seven, commitment - eight, intent - six, requirements - four, and beliefs - five.

### Analysis of Data

SPSS was used to analyze the data collected for this study. The hypotheses stated below were tested to determine any statistical significance at an alpha level of .05.

H1: There is a statistically significant relationship between participation in Intensive Leadership Development Programs for principals and intent to persist in the role of the principalship.

H2: There is a statistically significant relationship between administrators' views of Intensive Leadership Development Programs and the reported contribution of the program's effect on career sustainability and growth.

H3: There is a statistically significant relationship between administrators' reported commitment to participation in intensive professional development and the perceived value of the ILDP by district leadership.

H4: There is a statistically significant relationship between the perceived value of Intensive Leadership Development Programs to district leadership and the districts' use of Intensive Leadership Development Programs for incentives.

H5: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived value of Intensive Leadership Development Programs selected by administrators and the districts' requirement and procedures for dissemination of newly-gained knowledge.

H6: There is a statistically significant relationship between the high profile Intensive Leadership Development Programs and intent to persist.

H7: There is a statistically significant difference in the administrators' intent to persist based on participation in district-operated Intensive Leadership Development Programs than in the administrators' intent to persist based upon participation in Intensive Leadership Development Programs sponsored by outside agencies.

H8: There is a statistically significant difference in a districts' financial support of Intensive Leadership Development Programs for principals based on the length of tenure of principals.

The method of analysis used for Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 was regression to ascertain the predictive nature of the type of Intensive Leadership Development Programs on specifically identified variables, while the method of analysis used for Hypotheses 5, 7, and 8 was an ANOVA to determine the differences in dependent variables based on Intensive Leadership Development Programs and other specifically identified independent variables.

The test conducted for five of the eight hypotheses was a regression analysis, while the remaining three hypotheses underwent analysis utilizing ANOVA. The relationships that participation in intensive professional development programs has on longevity, contribution to sustainability and growth, and perception of value to district leaders were examined. In addition, a study of those variables, the difference between district-led programs and programs sponsored by outside agencies was examined. Another goal of this study sought to determine if a relationship exists between a district's perceived value and the district's use of ILDP participation as an incentive. The remaining hypothesis for study was the researcher's effort to determine the district's value of the ILDP based upon established dissemination procedures.

### Summary

The methodology for the proposed research study, The Merit of Intensive Leadership Development Programs (ILDP) on Building Level Administrator's

Sustainability, included the collection of data via the questionnaire created by the researcher and piloted by administrators in a small school district on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Participants are practicing building and district level administrators (assistant principals, principals, directors, assistant superintendents, and superintendents). Participating subjects returned, via mail, the completed questionnaire. After collecting and entering data in the SPSS program, statistical tests were conducted to determine significance at an alpha of .05.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain if participation in different types of leadership development initiatives is reported as instrumental in the sustainability of principals as measured by the “intent to persist” in the administrative role. The information in this chapter reports the results generated through running statistical analyses addressed in Chapter III. A factor analysis was conducted on the instrument items to test the reliability of the identified constructs or subscales. For the purpose of this study the terms construct and subscale will be used interchangeably. The subscales were *intent* – focus on one’s intent to persist in the position; *contribution* – focus on the contribution from having participated in a leadership development program; *commitment* – focus on one’s commitment after having participated in leadership development programs; *requirements* – focus on requirements associated with participation; *support* – focus on the support that participants received from central office administration; *use* – focus on one’s use of information learned from participation; *value* – focus on the value of participation; and *beliefs* – focus on one’s beliefs about participation.

Of the eight subscales, four were found to be reliable based on the results from the factor analysis. The four reliable subscales were use, support, contribution, and intent. There were eight items on the questionnaire that addressed intent. Use consisted of 11 items on the questionnaire. Support was



associated with seven items on the questionnaire and contribution had 10 items on the questionnaire (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Construct Reliability Coefficients*

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Use	.850	11
Support	.753	7
Contribution	.723	10
Intent	.702	6
Requirements	.519	4
Value	.508	7
Commitment	.421	8
Beliefs	-.131	5

While each of the constructs were measured by 4-7 items developed specifically for this study, the researcher identified, as limitations, the reliability of four of the eight constructs within the questionnaire used to collect data. The constructs that were found to lack reliability were beliefs, value, commitment, and requirements. Due to this fact, -- use, contribution, support, and intent -- were the basis for which the descriptive data were reported.

Of 365 randomly selected participants who were mailed questionnaires, 89 responded. The respondents consisted of practicing school and district level administrators in the state of Mississippi. Whereas 35.9% of the respondents

were building level administrators of some type, 25.8% were principals. Of the respondents, 64% were district level administrators who were directors, assistant superintendents, and superintendents. Superintendents represented 25.8% of the sample, the same as principals. The sample population reported the current role in which he or she served at the time the survey was administered. Table 2 shows the different educational administrative roles each subject served during their career.

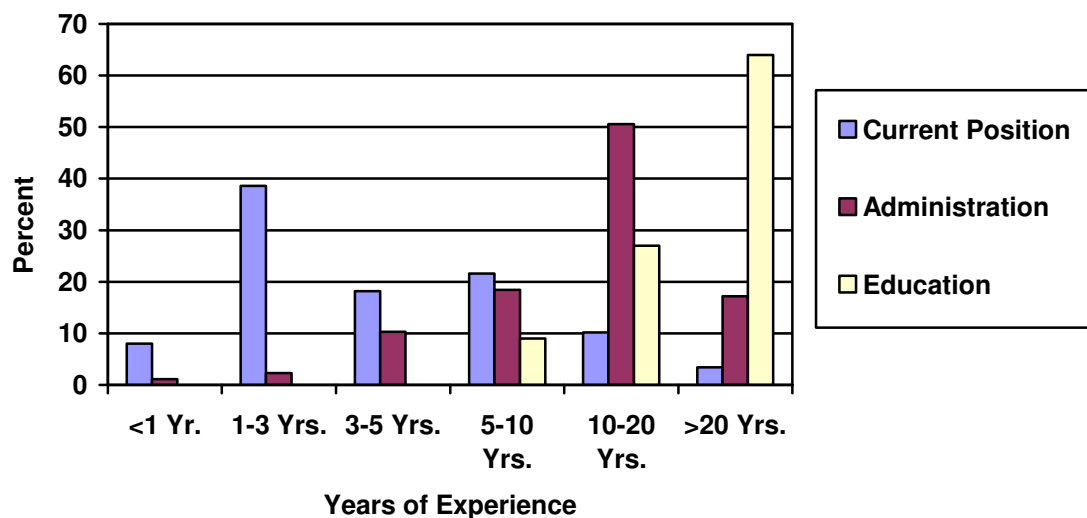
Table 2

*Roles Served by Respondents*

Role	Percent of Respondents
Lead Teacher	19.1
Assistant Principal	65.2
Principal	65.2
Director	44.9
Assistant Superintendent	12.4
Superintendent	14.6

Males accounted for 52.8% of the respondents while 47.2% were female. Only two ethnicities were represented in the study. Caucasians accounted for 69.7% of participants and African Americans accounted for 30.3%. Although 64% of the respondents have served more than 20 years in education, 3.3% have served more than 20 years in their current administrative position. The results showed that 38.6% of the respondents served 1-3 years and 18.2% have served

3-5 years in their current administrative position, respectively. The respondents who served 3-5 years as an administrator represent 10.3% of the sample group, while 50.6% of the respondents have served 10-20 years in administration. While the entire sample has served in education a minimum of 5 years, the least amount of administrative experience being represented is less than one year (see Figure 1).



*Figure 1.* Percent of Years Served in Current Position, Administration, and Education. Blue represented the years in the current position, purple represented the number of years served in administrative positions, and ivory represented the number of years served in education.

From this point, the analysis of data will shift to results generated from the reliable subscales or constructs. Table 3 is used to compare total means for the constructs – use, support, contribution, and intent. When comparing the subscale means with specific items addressing type of program attended, the subscale contribution had the largest number of values of means, 3.70 or higher with 13 items representing 11 to 74 responses from a total of 89 respondents.

Table 3

*Means and Standard Deviations*

Construct	Mean	SD	N
Use	3.45	.69	89
Support	3.63	.61	89
Contribution	3.80	.44	89
Intent	3.09	.63	89

The Intensive Leadership Development Programs identified for this study were Orientation for School Leaders (OSL), Millsaps Principals' Center Institutes, Harvard Principals' Center Institutes, National Institute of School Leaders (NISL), and Other Leadership Development Programs (see Table 4). The programs,

Table 4

*Participation by Program Type*

Program Type	Percent Participated
Orientation for School Leaders (OSL)	83.1
Millsaps Principals' Center Institutes	18
Harvard Principals' Center Institutes	10.1
National Institute for School Leadership (NISL)	12.4
Other Leadership Development Programs	69.7

Harvard Principals' Center Institutes and Millsaps Principals' Center Institutes were attended by some of the participants in this study. Both programs have traction in the state of Mississippi. Only five administrators reported that they attended both Millsaps and Harvard's Principals' Center Institutes as a principal, while two administrators reported that they attended Harvard's Principals' Center Institutes as an assistant principal. Orientation for School Leaders (OSL) had the highest percentage of participation when examining program type and Other Leadership Development Programs had the second highest percentage of participation.

The construct intent did not have any means above 3.7 when cross tabulated with any of the questions addressing program participation or type of program. However, the construct Use had higher means ( $M = 3.70$ ,  $SD = .61$ ), ( $M = 3.84$ ,  $SD = .43$ ) for assistant principal participants in the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) and participation in Other Programs as an assistant principal. The means for the subscales contribution and support, when identifying the position of participants, indicated that principals and directors represented over 50% of the respondents who reported that they attended Other Intensive Leadership Development Programs (see Table 5).

Table 5

*Reported Means by Position during Participation in "Other" Programs*

Position	Contribution			Support		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Assistant Principal	3.85	.34	15	4.02	.28	15

Table 5 (continued).

Position	Contribution			Support		
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N
Principal	3.95	.37	35	3.75	.52	35
Director	4.02	.40	21	3.90	.57	21
Assistant Supt.	3.80	.43	12	3.76	.38	12
Superintendent	3.97	.28	15	3.95	.41	15

### Comparison by Program Type

A comparison of means across subscales by program type showed means for the subscale intent as having the lower means (see Table 6). The subscale

Table 6

### *Subscale Comparison by Program Type*

Program Type	Contribution	Support	Intent	Use	N
Orientation for School Leaders	3.84	3.63	3.07	3.44	74
Millsaps Principals Institute	3.69	3.61	3.02	3.59	16
Harvard Principals' Center Institutes	3.82	3.42	3.22	3.71	9
National Institute for School Leadership	3.79	3.79	2.77	3.70	11
Other Programs	3.91	3.76	3.15	3.65	62

intent consistently had the lower means in a comparison of the four subscales when program type was examined. The remaining subscales reflected in Table 6 were high with contribution having the higher, more positive mean.

The program Orientation for School Leaders (OSL) yielded means above 3.7 for three groups with 11 or more respondents of the 89 study participants for the contribution subscale. They were assistant principals, principals, and directors. The reported means and standard deviations for each group were  $M = 3.80$ ,  $SD = .41$ ,  $M = 3.92$ ,  $SD = .45$ , and  $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = .51$ . Only the director group yielded a mean higher than 3.70 for the support subscale for the OSL program  $M = 3.94$ ,  $SD = .85$ . The number of respondents from the director group indicating that they participated in OSL was 11 out of the 89 participants which represented 12% of the study participants.

### Research Hypotheses

Of the eight hypotheses reported in Chapter III for which this research was conducted, none corresponded with the four reliable constructs, resulting in the exclusive use of descriptive data analysis reporting on the reliable constructs.

H1: There is a statistically significant relationship between participation in Intensive Leadership Development Programs for principals and intent to persist in the role of the principalship. This hypothesis could not be addressed as the construct Intent could not be measured.

H2: There is a statistically significant relationship between administrators' views of Intensive Leadership Development Programs and the reported contribution of the program's effect on career sustainability and growth. This

hypothesis could not be addressed as the construct Value did not have adequate reliability.

H3: There is a statistically significant relationship between administrators' reported commitment to participation in intensive professional development and the perceived value of the ILDP by district leadership. This hypothesis could not be addressed as the construct Commitment did not have adequate reliability.

H4: There is a statistically significant relationship between the perceived value of Intensive Leadership Development Programs to district leadership and the districts' use of Intensive Leadership Development Programs for incentives. This hypothesis could not be addressed as the construct Value did not have adequate reliability.

H5: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived value of Intensive Leadership Development Programs selected by administrators and the districts' requirement and procedures for dissemination of newly-gained knowledge. This hypothesis could not be addressed as the construct Requirement did not have adequate reliability.

H6: There is a statistically significant relationship between the high profile Intensive Leadership Development Programs and intent to persist. This hypothesis could not be addressed as the construct Intent could not be measured.

H7: There is a statistically significant difference in the administrators' intent to persist based on participation in district-operated Intensive Leadership Development Programs than in the administrators' intent to persist based upon



participation in Intensive Leadership Development Programs sponsored by outside agencies. This hypothesis could not be addressed as the construct Intent could not be measured.

H8: There is a statistically significant difference in a districts' financial support of Intensive Leadership Development Programs for principals based on the length of tenure of principals. This hypothesis could not be addressed as the construct Support could not be measured.

### Summary

In conclusion, the purpose of this study was to ascertain if participation in leadership development initiatives was reported as instrumental in the sustainability of principals as measured by the "intent to persist" in the administrative role. Of 365 randomly selected participants who were mailed questionnaires, 89 responded. The respondents consisted of practicing school and district level administrators in the state of Mississippi. Whereas statistical analyses were not addressed due to the weakness in the reliability of the construct coefficients for four subscales, descriptive statistics were addressed to provide the analysis of the data collected. Means for demographics, participation in Intensive Leadership Development Programs, positions served while participating in Intensive Leadership Development Programs were used to determine the basis for the findings, implications for policy and practice, and recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to ascertain if participation in leadership development initiatives, Intensive Leadership Development Programs (ILDPs), was reported as instrumental in the sustainability of principals as measured by the “intent to persist” in the administrative role. This section of the study addresses the results yielded from the analysis of collected data.

Of 365 randomly selected participants who were mailed questionnaires, 89 responded. The respondents consisted of practicing school and district level administrators in the state of Mississippi. While basic demographic data were collected on gender, ethnicity, and years of experience, information on the types of program participation, its usefulness, value, and contribution to the administrator while operating in the role of a building level leader was solicited from the sample group as well. The participants were also asked to respond to items that addressed support by leadership, requirements associated with participation (program and district), and their beliefs about participation in these types of programs, as well as their commitment to the role after participation in such programs.

The instrument, developed by the researcher, addressed eight constructs or subscales (intent, value, contribution, commitment, requirements, beliefs, support, and use). The constructs were defined for the purpose of this study as follows: *intent*– focus on one’s intent to persist in the position; *contribution* –

focus on the contribution from having participated; *commitment* – focus on one’s commitment after having participated; *requirements* - focus on requirements associated with participation; *support* - focus on the support that participants receive; *use* – focus on one’s use of information learned from participation; *value* – focus on the value of participation; and *beliefs* – focus on one’s beliefs about participation.

### Findings

Of the 89 participants who responded, the majority were district level administrators who were serving as directors, assistant superintendents, or superintendents. However, 64.4% of the respondents had served in the role of assistant principal and principal at some point during his or her career. Administrators currently serving as principals represented 25.8% of the participants. Interestingly, 37.8% of all the respondents currently serving in their position had been in those positions 1-3 years, indicating that over one-third of the participants were relatively new to their positions, whether as principal or in some other district leadership role.

The data that addressed types of programs showed that the majority of administrators, school or district level, attended some form of intensive leadership development. Orientation for School Leaders (OSL), which was used by the state of Mississippi to induct new school level leaders, principals, and assistant principals, had the highest rate of participation. “Other Leadership Development Programs” were next, which might account for administrators who might not have received their initial administrative certification in the state of

Mississippi or those who have participated in some type of program not identified in this study. The well known programs offered by Harvard and Millsaps had low percentages of participation, which could be explained by the state's shift in the attention given to these programs that were once very popular in the state during the mid to late 1990s and early 2000s.

The high scores on constructs or subscales Support and Contribution identified that the director and principal groups had stronger participation in "Other" types of Intensive Leadership Development Programs. This finding indicated that support by school district leaders to attend and participate in these programs was provided and that the contribution was a factor to the participant as it pertained to their carrying out the role of principal or director.

Orientation for School Leaders (OSL) was shown to yield positive results for the assistant principals, principals, and directors with the Support subscale. This again should be an indication of the state of Mississippi's requirement, until recently, for new administrators to participate in and successfully complete this program for career level licensure. Given that the data used descriptive analyses, the next section provides an analysis of the relationship between the hypotheses and literature to substantiate the study. Each hypothesis presented is briefly connected to the literature to provide cohesion.

Hypothesis 1 was originally designed to test if there was a statistically significant relationship between participation in Intensive Leadership Development Programs for principals and intent to persist in the role of the principalship. This hypothesis could not be addressed statistically, as the

construct Intent could not be measured. While this hypothesis could not be tested, the descriptive data provided for a generalization based upon the means for the subscales contribution, use, and support. Although the mean for intent was lower for all program types represented in this study, the other subscales did indicate higher, more positive means. This allowed the researcher to infer that the relative importance of the subscales with the higher means to the role of the principalship or other building level administrative role plays into an administrator's overall intent to persist in the position. The literature supported the premise that principals and other school-based leaders are continually thrust into the fluid domain of educational leadership, accountability, and public school reform. The guise under which they are expected to navigate this nebulous realm is via professional or leadership development. The literature and federal law support the call for increased attention to the development of new and veteran school-based leaders. The implications of this research could be far-reaching in that thousands of dollars are expended annually by both school districts and foundations to support efforts at providing professional development opportunities for principals.

The concern with regard to "intent to persist" became an issue when an examination of age by Fink and Brayman (2006), in an international study involving western countries, provided statistics delineating the age of building level administrators from 1993 -1994. They showed that "37% were older than age 50, 53.6% between the ages of 40 and 49, and 9.5% age 39 or younger" (p. 63). One statistic documents the attrition rate at 45% to 55% for principals

spanning an 8-year period (Grogan & Andrews, 2002). In addition, contributing factors to the attrition and subsequent shortage of principals, according to Grogan and Andrews (2002), were

(a) the nature of the job, (b) insufficient salary to warrant the risks and personal time to assume the position, and (c) lack of mobility of candidates to accept jobs that are open. A fourth factor is surely the additional stress of meeting state benchmarks to remain accredited in this era of high stakes testing and accountability. (p. 237)

Hypothesis 2 was originally designed to test if there was a statistically significant relationship between administrator's views of Intensive Leadership Development Programs and the reported contribution of the program's effect on career sustainability and growth. This hypothesis could not be addressed statistically, as the construct Value did not have adequate reliability. In addition to the Fink and Brayman (2006) study on principals' age, the idea that leadership development must be on-going was being addressed in the 1960s when Pharis (1966) stipulated that the idea of change for the elementary school principal would require "competent, scholarly, professional leadership" in order to effectively "read the emotional compass and point the direction" of education (p. 5). He further stated that "One can be prepared for the principalship in a graduate school or through an internship, but one learns to be a principal only after one becomes a principal" (p. 8). Thus formed the foundation for his push for in-service development in 1966 to promote the following: (a) continued

learning, (b) remedial function, (c) keeping pace with change, and (d) increased efficiency of elementary school principals.

Hypothesis 3 was originally designed to test if there was a statistically significant relationship between administrators' reported commitment to participation in intensive professional development and the perceived value of the ILDP by district leadership. This hypothesis could not be addressed statistically, as the construct Commitment did not have adequate reliability. However, educators' concerns with many of the attempted passes at providing professional development vowing to allow leaders to sharpen their respective saws included, but were not limited to, ineffective planning and implementation in addition to failure on the part of program designers to solidify support from key players within school systems (Petzko, 2004). Hirsh (2002) urged educational leaders to carefully consider staff development of their school leaders. She recommended the professional development require of leaders the ability to strategically direct continuous academic growth. In examining the goals for professional development for school leaders, careful and consistent review is necessitated by the desire for ensuring optimum levels of performance by its stakeholders.

According to Elmore (2002), the mechanism by which to improve a school is through an investment in those who are employed therein. Elmore (2002) asserted that the professional growth of administrators has in times past been based upon the amassing of credit through college courses which in some instances may not be what is needed for that individual in his or her given place

of employment. Elmore (2002) contended that because of the plane on which the accountability wheel, in regard to education, rolls with its lack of “structures or processes” (p. 3), which could truly support administrators, schools have inevitably become “inhospitable places for learning” (p. 3). The environment is not only hostile for the adults, but for the children as well. The solution for this accountability conundrum lies in the need for “reciprocity of accountability for capacity” (p. 3). This, according to Elmore (2002), will set the stage for the one in power to provide an avenue by which the requirement for improved performance is matched by the provision of a feasible vehicle for meeting the desired growth requirement. Conversely, the investment made into the skill and knowledge acquisition of an administrator or teacher necessitates the condition for improvement in performance. Dennis Sparks (2000), of the National Staff Development Council, supported the move to propel professional development for principals beyond the familiar realm of passivity. He described leadership development for principals as the “neglected stepchild of state and district professional development efforts” (p. 2). Dufour (2001) advocated the creation of an appropriate context for learning. His proposition that school-level administrators become students of the teaching-learning process is critical to that of the leadership piece with regard to the growth and development of principals.

Hypothesis 4 was originally designed to test if there was a statistically significant relationship between the perceived value of Intensive Leadership Development Programs to district leadership and the districts’ use of Intensive Leadership Development Programs for incentives, even though this hypothesis



could not be addressed statistically, as the construct Value did not have adequate reliability. The business sector provided the best source of literature to support this hypothesis. Colgate-Palmolive is a company that provides consumers, world-wide, with a variety of products aimed at meeting one's personal and household needs. The researchers focused their attention for the purpose of this study on the initiative for training leaders on the global stage. The organization's primary tenets that undergird its efforts to build and sustain leadership capacity is to "identify high potentials early, assign sequence of challenging work, provide constructive feedback and coaching, and offer continuous learning opportunities" (Giber et al., 2000, p. 208). Allied Signal's re-design and implementation of the 360-degree Multi-Source Feedback (MSF) Program was also critical in its system for evaluation and feedback. An endorsement from the company's chief executive officer reads as follows:

At AlliedSignal, effective MSF stands as evidence of our commitment to improving and developing the abilities of all employees. Moreover, it reflects a true team environment, one in which leaders stand not in judgment of subordinates' performance, but rather act as partners so we effectively build on our strengths and eliminate weaknesses to become better leaders and more capable team members. (p. 45)

PECO Energy Company's focus for leadership development involved a process of selection by nomination and on-going support via coaching. The initiative's objectives were identification of the competencies necessary for competing in today's market; developing an organized and strategic identification

and development plan to build the “leadership bench” (p. 369); categorization of assets and deficits of existing leadership by instituting a nonbiased agency to facilitate the process; and the formation, as well as the carrying out of strategies, to decrease the “leadership requirement gaps” (p. 369).

Hypothesis 5 was originally designed to test if there was a statistically significant difference in the perceived value of Intensive Leadership Development Programs selected by administrators and the districts’ requirement and procedures for dissemination of newly-gained knowledge. This hypothesis could not be addressed as the construct Requirement did not have adequate reliability. Jones and Hooper (2006-2007) identified tactics aimed at addressing the labor of the educational researcher to clarify meaningful leadership. They asserted that by empowering the principal as an agent of change, he or she moves well beyond the familiar role of manager to that of facilitator of the “teaching and learning process” (p. 27).

The role further required that the administrator become efficient at distribution of human and material resources in addition to the implementation of learning communities as essential vehicles in the push for sustainable improvement. Hughes (2005) supported the implementation of a rigorous model developed by the National Institute for School Leadership that would provide the type of training that is intense and on-going for a period of 18 to 24 months. Evans and Mohr (1999), in an examination of the Annenberg Principles, stated that professional development for principals must refrain from the traditional methods usually employed. Programs must require principals to venture beyond

comfort into an environment that would lead them to think about their own learning, which is not always a place of comfort. Fenwick and Pierce (2002) acknowledged the complex nature of school systems. Consequently, they advocated support for principals' need of growth opportunities that will propel them toward lasting improvement.

Hypothesis 6 was originally designed to test if there was a statistically significant relationship between the high profile Intensive Leadership Development Programs and intent to persist. As with the other hypotheses presented, this hypothesis could not be addressed statistically, as the construct Intent could not be measured. However, the descriptive statistics would indicate by the experience in administration and in current roles, that those who participated in the Harvard Principals' Center were those who may have been funded by the Phil Hardin Foundation as Ward Fellows. The well-known programs offered by Harvard which were once perceived as prestigious opportunities for participation in leadership development, have now become more visible and are attended on a wider scale, which may explain the state of Mississippi's apparent shift in the attention given to these programs which were once very popular in the state during the mid-to late 1990s and early 2000s. Another reason for the shift in attention by the state of Mississippi could be attributed to the availability of the more cost effective Millsaps Principals' Institute which was established based on Roland Barth's vision for the Harvard Principals' Center. While other leadership initiatives were addressed in this study, information regarding the profile status and or ranking among leadership

programs was not provided. Nevertheless, the means for those participating in Harvard Principals' Center or Millsaps Principals' Institute were positive for all subscales except intent. The same generalization regarding the intent to persist noted previously for Hypothesis 1 can be applied due to the importance of the subscales use, support, and contribution on carrying out the role of the principalship or other building level administrative role.

Hypothesis 7 was originally designed to test if there was a statistically significant difference in the administrators' intent to persist based on participation in district-operated Intensive Leadership Development Programs than in the administrators' intent to persist based upon participation in Intensive Leadership Development Programs sponsored by outside agencies. This hypothesis could not be addressed statistically, as the construct Intent could not be measured. Again, as with Hypothesis 1, it can be generalized regardless of whether it is a program carried out by an outside agency or an in-house initiative, that the higher, positive means for the subscales contribution, use, and support provided corroboration that the sample found participation in these types of programs beneficial and a factor in their intent to persist in the role. It is also important to note that an analysis of descriptive data in reference to participation in Other Leadership Development Programs, principals and directors (curriculum directors and federal programs directors) represented over 50% of the respondents when the position was cross-tabbed with the subscales contribution and support. This indicates value in that both positions could be said to have the greater impact on student achievement than the other roles. The principal because he or she

serves as the instructional leader of the building, curriculum directors because of their role as the designers and overseers of curricula and its implementation, and the federal programs directors because of their role in securing grants subsequent management of those funds to support instructional initiatives.

The literature maintained that school districts have begun to venture toward building in-service programs that aid in supporting principals (Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe & Meyerson, 2005). While some attempts by larger urban districts to provide continuous support had been made, the number was limited as to how many would continue to provide that support once the candidate for hire was on the job. An example of a district's endeavor was that of New York City in the development of a Leadership Academy that focused on principal development for novice and veteran leaders. Their efforts at securing sustainable leadership worked toward continuous development that served to create a "lasting infrastructure" of leadership (p. 16). According to this study, districts that had moved toward development of their own "academies" for their leaders had done so as a part of school or district reform. Areas of focus for these intensive developments had been a provision of support for coaching and evaluating staff, problem-solving, and mentoring. Some states (Missouri, Georgia, and North Carolina) led in the movement to develop leadership academies for not only their principals but for superintendents as well. In addition, in Jefferson County, Kentucky, partnerships between public and private entities have collaborated to meet the growing need of its school leaders by providing in-service and on-going support to new principals and new assistant

principals.

Hypothesis 8 was originally designed to test if there was a statistically significant difference in a districts' financial support of Intensive Leadership Development Programs for principals based on the length of tenure of principals. This hypothesis could not be addressed statistically, as the construct Support could not be measured. As with the other reliable subscales, the descriptive data allowed for generalization regarding this hypothesis. Of the four reliable subscales, support was the second strongest. The means reflecting the subscale support for program participation by type had positive means, the lowest being for the Harvard Principals' Center. This finding would indicate that the sample generally felt supported by their central office when it was in relation to leadership development opportunities.

While literature addressing districts' financial investment in inhouse leadership development initiatives was limited, the literature that addressed corporate expenditures on development of leaders provided a glimpse into costs associated with development initiatives on the business front. Organizations that were studied in the best practices study conducted by Giber et al. (2000), showed that the investment was in excess of one million dollars for 47% of the organizations involved in this study, 33% of the participants invested between \$100,000 and \$750,000, while 13% were recorded as having invested less than \$100,000 (Giber et al., 2000). They also provided the following description of the current status of leadership development initiatives in which a provocative look into where current trend based upon the data collected from this research will

take future efforts in the area of developing leaders.

Organizations are committing to education and training that deepen the specific skills, perspective, and competencies they expect of their current and emerging leaders. By combining [the various methods for acquiring feedback in their] leadership [development] initiatives, [they] are successfully building teams of leaders who see both the forest and the trees, [leaders] who [have the capacity to] understand their customers' demands today and drive strategy and action to anticipate their demands tomorrow. The next two decades promise further innovation, integration, and investment in inhouse leadership education; as leadership at all levels grows more critical, so will the systems for leadership development. (p. 447)

### Discussion

The issue of adequate support structures for administrators has seemingly taken center-stage with the birth and evolution of Intensive Leadership Development Programs (ILDPs). These programs are tailored to meet the needs of promising novice administrators and have evolved to encompass the needs of veteran principals. All over the United States, programs to enhance the professional growth of school level administrators have been designed and implemented. Many have been deemed effective; however, the question of whether these programs cultivate longevity in building level administrators or whether they serve to foster rapid mobility toward promotion beyond the building level became a legitimate concern for this researcher. Darling-Hammond,

LaPointe, Meyerson, and Orr (2007) fittingly maintained the stance that the yield from the expectation for improved academic performance as an eventual and natural derivative of enhanced leadership capacity has subsequently resulted in the increasing availability of substantive research conducted in the area of leadership development. In short, “a surge of investment in and scrutiny of programs that recruit, prepare and develop principals” (p. 1) ingresses onto the stage that has been set for the development of principals in this rapidly mutating age of accountability and potentially declining time of sustainability.

Professional development, leadership development, Intensive Leadership Development Programs, or whatever initiatives aimed at better preparing and supporting principals and other administrators in education is rife with ideas on how to improve leadership capacity. However, with the increasing number of options now available, do they accomplish the ultimate goal of selecting, retaining, and sustaining individuals for longevity? The issues addressed by this study focused on the area of sustainability with regard to Use, Intent, Support, Commitment, Contribution, Value, Beliefs, and Requirements with the overall objective of examining sustainability in the principalship.

The ideal principal requires a multitude of abilities and the capacity to utilize them in such a way as to accommodate the ever-expanding context of the principalship. The study on how principals view professional growth opportunities for their staffs found, for some of the subjects, that it was paramount for the building leaders to participate in professional development opportunities, because in order to lead the development of their own staffs, they must lead by



example by engaging regularly in staff development to gain knowledge and to improve on current practices (Short & Jones, 1991).

Therefore, the question that remains is “Are these initiatives effective in sustaining and retaining principals?” While the descriptive data from this study would suggest that the measures are effective and do cultivate longevity or intent to persist in the position, the value of fidelity to the implementation and application of learning should not be overlooked. Therefore, the question explains the need for a scrutinously broaching of states, districts, school improvement agencies, leadership organizations, and individual consultants’ efforts to address this matter on a broader scale. According to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), the capacity to lead teachers is reflected in the instructional leader or principal’s commitment to demonstrating that he or she is a learner as well (ASCD Education Update, 2010). In Atlanta, Project LEAD, a leadership capacity building initiative, was established with the support of the Wallace Foundation. This initiative was used to provide participants with the opportunity to develop as leaders in education who have been developed from within the system (Mezzacapa, 2008).

The Stanford School Leadership Study (2005) stated the following about principals of today.

Principals are expected to be educational visionaries, instructional and curriculum leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public relations and communications experts, budget analysts, facility managers, special programs administrators, as well as guardians of

various legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives. In addition, principals are expected to serve the often conflicting needs and interests of many stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, district office officials, unions and state and federal agencies. As a result, many scholars and practitioners argue that the demands of the job requirements far exceed the reasonable capacities of any one person. (Davis et al., 2005, p. 3)

This quote from the findings of the Stanford Leadership Study underscores the results from this researcher's analysis of data in that participants' involvement in some type of intensive leadership development program whether state required or otherwise is of critical importance to increasing their capacity to carry forward amid the increasing responsibilities now associated with the position.

#### Recommendations for Policy and Practice

Sterrett and Haas (2009) discussed the value of "vertical professional learning community" (p. 78). They asserted that maintaining a deliberate focus on their own development through collegial interactions throughout the school year was beneficial to the maturation and enhancement of their performance as an instructional leader. Sterrett and Haas (2009) identified six criteria for their professional learning time together, (a) "honoring each other's time," (b) "bypass whining and head straight to problem solving," (c) "focus on improving instruction," (d) "commit to honesty and share information without competition," (e) "observe instruction together," and (f) "spur professional growth" (pp. 78-79).

The authors' action to move beyond what appeared to be situations and

settings that were stifling to the authenticity of school improvement measures in their schools subsequently evolved into a form of learning for those participating leaders that was genuine and practical. The administrators', knowing that there was something lacking, moved on that knowledge to do what was best for their schools and staff. Conversely, Wilms (2009) documented something different and troubling. He identified an instance in which the actions by an administrator, who did make changes to distribute leadership, impact professional learning with the staff and within the school to do what was best for students, and who made positive gains with regard to student achievement, led to termination because, according to Wilms, "district leaders were blinded by their conviction that top-down control is the only way to run schools. They did not understand that sustaining successful reform requires teacher commitment and leadership" (p. 40).

It is imperative that principals become focused on identifying, then carrying out what is identified as needs for improvement in student achievement in their schools. While it is an endeavor of shared commitment by all stakeholders, it is an endeavor that requires the focus of the building leader. Therefore, more courage to step out and do that which is best for schools, which is grounded in researched best practices, as was the case of Sterrett and Haas (2009), is a clarion call, especially in the absence of financial resources.

In today's climate of accountability and school and district improvement, principals and superintendents run the risk of being characterized as "saviors" (Collins, 2009, p. 89). Superintendents operating in their role on a broader scale

than principals are more likely to face this characterization as the chief executive officer of the entire system more so than principals. A superintendent's entrance into a district, more likely than not a district that moved into some form of improvement as identified by the federal government, or by some state system of accountability or accreditation, is intricately laced with expectation for galvanizing change. Although this task, whether a savior-type superintendent or a superintendent working toward sustainable positive change, may be daunting, Collins (2009) provided seven behaviors in his book *How The Mighty Fall And Why Some Companies Never Give In* that could assist with an organization's emergence from what might be classified as falling. As described in the book, six of the seven behaviors will be shared for purposes of this study:

- (a) Formulate strategic changes based on empirical evidence, and extensive strategic and quantitative analysis, rather than make bold untested leaps;
- (b) get the facts, think and then act (or not) with calm determination; never take actions that will imperil the company long-term;
- (c) gain clarity about what is core and should be held firm, and what needs to change, building upon proven strengths and eliminating weaknesses;
- (d) focus on performance, letting tangible results provide the strongest case for a new direction;
- (e) create momentum with a series of good decisions, supremely well executed, that build one upon another; and
- (f) search for a disciplined executive with a bias for selecting a proven performer from the inside. (p. 90)

The deliberate threading of recruitment, selection, placement, training, and

induction of leaders is vital to an organization's potential for cultivating and sustaining an atmosphere of learning and increased student achievement results (Bossidy & Charan, 2002; Schlechty, 2005). The type of threading required, as described throughout the review of literature, must be inclusive of district policy makers, the school boards. It would be advantageous for school boards, when making decisions about a leader for their district, to take into consideration the list of the six behaviors previously noted (Collins, 2009). In addition, school boards cannot discount their role in organizational dysfunction, regardless of whether the dysfunction was present at the time of serving on the board or if it was created during one's tenure on the school board. Collins (2009) stated that "organizational decline, unlike cancer, is largely self-inflicted" (p. 3). Therefore, the modification of ineffective and aged policies is necessary and the subsequent "execution" of said policies (Bossidy & Charan, 2002, p. 22) is of critical importance to a seamless threading of overall district improvement.

Phillip Schlechty (2002), founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Center for Leadership in Reform, tackles change that leads to improvement in his book *Working on the Work*. He addressed the familiar modus operandi of many school districts to motivate learners with methods or measures that have no sustainable improvement value, with the fundamental principle that whether teacher, principal, or superintendent, "the primary function of a leader is to inspire others to do things they might otherwise not do and encourage others to go in directions they might not otherwise pursue" (p. xx), Schlechty delved into the arena of school improvement with the spotlight on the role leadership has in

implementing and authenticating engagement. So, based upon the premise that engagement is the key to sustainable improvement, “assumptions” (p. xvii) were derived that focused on undertakings that those who were responsible for the delivery of instruction in schools and districts will need to assume in order to create the culture of engaged learning supported by his research.

Schlechty (2002) acknowledged the need for support held by principals.

He stated that:

the key to the survival of public education in America is the development of a cadre of school leaders who have a clear grasp of the purpose of schools ensuring that every child, every day, is provided with engaging work to do that results in the child’s learning something that is important to the child and to the continuation of the culture. Leaders also must be skilled in creating conditions in the systems they lead (schools and school districts) that support the changes needed to enable the schools to serve their purpose. (pp. 52-53)

Being able to utilize capacity standards to galvanize an organization’s improvement efforts, according to Schlechty (2002) is the organization’s most probable avenue toward significant performance improvement. Thus, the capacity standards, building from what Schlechty identified as the business of schools, which at its core is engagement and content, are shored up through rigorous and relevant development of its leaders. The capacity standard “developing structures for participatory leadership” (p. 47) addresses the system that undergirds leadership development initiatives of a school or district. Having

become adept at the systematizing of this capacity standard demonstrates a district's evolution toward the provision of continuous development opportunities that prepare those currently charged with the responsibility of leadership in schools and districts as well as those who have been identified as possessing potential for future leadership endeavors.

Bossidy and Charan (2002), stated in the book *Execution*, that “execution is fundamental to strategy and has to shape it. No worthwhile strategy can be planned without taking into account the organizations ability to execute it” (p. 21). When examining practice, in terms of quality leadership development, execution is the variable that requires sustained attention. According to Bossidy and Charan (2002), execution is “a systemic process of rigorously discussing the hows and whats, questioning, tenaciously following through, and ensuring accountability” (p. 22). In more simplistic terms, it is about “exposing reality and acting upon it” (p. 22). They further contended that organizations typically miss the mark when it comes to capitalizing on creating the leadership potential in their firms due to failure on their end to do this when “selecting, training, and the development of their leaders” (p. 22).

Although this study did not allow for the analysis of Hypothesis 7 regarding the difference in the administrators who participate in district-operated Intensive Leadership Development Programs intent to persist and the administrators who participate in intensive leadership programs sponsored by outside agencies intent to persist. It stands to reason that organizations from the corporate environment addressed the development of its leaders in terms of developing

leaders from within as a means of sustainability, sometimes referred to as developing “bench strength,” implemented “succession plans,” and did not discount the overall worth of practices of 360° feedback, developing soft skills, and reflective practices of its people. After examining the literature, it appeared that more and more school districts are investing in initiatives that focus on such practices in a more deliberate approach as indicated throughout the review of literature presented in this study. Fullan (2009) addressed embedded learning from the job, organization, and system. In terms of impacting schools in a transformational way each facet has to be addressed when developing leaders.

#### Limitations

The researcher identified, as limitations, the reliability of four of the eight constructs within the questionnaire used to collect data. The constructs that were found to lack reliability were beliefs, value, commitment, and requirements subsequently leading to the inability to test Hypotheses 1-8 because none of the reliable constructs corresponded with the hypotheses. Due to this fact, four constructs, use, contribution, support, and intent, were the basis for which the descriptive data were reported. An anticipated limitation was the access to the complete participant list of individuals who attended the Harvard Principals’ Center Institutes from 1999 to 2010 and the complete participant list of individuals who attend the Millsaps Principals’ Center Institutes from 2001 to 2010.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

The researcher recommends future research including revising the



instrument used for this study to develop reliable items in order to fully test the hypotheses presented in this study. On a wider scale, a study involving an examination of school systems that have adopted business management models to operate school systems would provide for interesting data, especially in the age of results-driven education and leadership and the move toward common core standards. When considering what warrants further exploration on this topic, intensive leadership development initiatives supported by organizations, colleges and universities, as well as school districts should examine the cost effectiveness of such programs and the impact on the sustainability of the principalship. Districts spend thousands of dollars annually on professional development. Many leadership development programs can be extremely costly, whether inhouse or well-known programs. While the federal government, through grants, makes funding available to support such initiatives, districts must examine the effectiveness of such programs, especially if districts have found that the return on their investment has been less than what was desired (USDOE, 2006).

A comparative analysis of districts across the state and possibly the nation that have chosen to utilize their funds to support comprehensive development initiatives such as an intensive leadership development program deserves attention. Districts that have found a way to meet their needs from the classroom to the boardroom in the goal to improve and sustain quality student achievement deserve recognition. While to some degree this has been done through the work of foundations, the research typically highlights efforts put into place via district partnerships with participating foundations.

## Summary

Principals have been vacating their positions for a variety of reasons. Whether those reasons were due to retirement, regardless of it being traditional or premature, due to unforeseen circumstances, or because of the pressures of current accountability regulations, sincere and tenacious effort to revitalize the capacity building proficiency as well as the consistency of implementation of the work of those remaining and entering the field of educational administration must be taken seriously (Hargreaves, 2005). It is safe to state that professional development of building level administrators in K-12 education at the outset of entering the field typically involves a variety of required training for career licensure (Petzko, 2004). Nevertheless, at a time when a once prestigious and rarely vacant position has become increasingly difficult to fill, the need for relevant, effective, rigorous, and supportive professional development for principals has reached a status of utmost urgency (Evans & Mohr, 1999; Whitaker, 2002). According to Colvin (2007), "Haycock said the achievement gap that educators and political leaders talk so much about cannot be narrowed, let alone closed, without strong leaders who believe in students' potential" (p.15). This is supported by an ever-increasing chorus of research endeavors that target the endorsement of leadership development initiatives that result in improved student outcomes (DeVita, 2007).

The role of the school-based leader, specifically, the principal, is laced with various and increasingly more taxing areas of responsibilities. This has subsequently led to a form of metamorphosis of the position from that of

manager to that of instructional leader. More than that, the metamorphosis is continuously being re-altered to be inclusive of traits that are being classified as nontraditional as they pertain to leadership in schools in order to build a school leader's capacity for bringing about sustainable school reform. The issues addressed by this study focused on the area of sustainability. Are leaders who have been placed in the role of principal, assistant principal, or school-based leader supported professionally by their states and local districts to effectively operate in and remain in the role long enough to bring about real, sustainable improvement? The researcher examined leadership development initiatives that have taken on the formidable task of not only identifying and selecting individuals, but that have also forged ahead to provide those who are chosen with the mechanisms of support to sustain them while they serve in those leadership roles.

Of 365 randomly selected participants who were mailed questionnaires, 89 responded. The respondents consisted of practicing school and district level administrators in the state of Mississippi. While basic demographic data were collected on gender, ethnicity, and years of experience, information on the types of program participation, its usefulness, value, and contribution to the administrator while operating in the role of a building level leader was solicited from the sample group as well. The participants were also asked to respond to items that addressed support by leadership, requirements associated with participation (program and district), and their beliefs about participation in these types of programs, as well as their commitment to the role after participation in

such programs.

This study was designed to answer questions relating to the sustainability of administration in building level leadership using eight constructs. These constructs are beliefs, value, commitment, requirements, use, contribution, support, and intent, with each being measured by four to seven items developed specifically for this study. Of the eight constructs, only four were demonstrated to have reliability coefficients of .70 or above. Descriptive statistics on the types of programs were addressed; however, statistical analyses were not addressed due to the weakness in the reliability of the construct coefficients for four subscales. The means results supported the strongest participation in Orientation for School Leaders (OSL) and "Other" types of programs by the respondents when cross tabulated with the reliable constructs.

In conclusion, the research supported the dire need for integral programming when addressing the development of it leaders, primarily principals. If leadership capacity is an overarching goal of school boards and superintendents, then conversations filled with candor regarding the reality of current circumstances with districts must occur (Collins, 2001). Reeves (2010), in *Transforming Professional Development into Student Results*, addressed a painstaking look, if required, into causes behind school improvement failures. Meticulous examinations of effects were not sufficient to bring about the type of transformation schools and districts are seeking. Reeves identified nine characteristics that were associated with school improvement planning success: (a) "comprehensive needs assessment," (b) "inquiry process," (c) "specificity," (d)

“measurability,” (e) “achievability,” (f) “relevance,” (g) “timeliness,” and (h) “monitoring” (p. 35). According to Reeves (2010), while variations in gains existed, the evidence of consistency with improvements was present, which supported a focus on the nine criteria when planning.

Collins (2009) stated in *How The Mighty Fall And Why Some Companies Never Give In*,

Every institution is vulnerable, no matter how great. No matter how much you’ve achieved, no matter how far you’ve gone, no matter how much power you’ve garnered, you are vulnerable to decline. There is no law of nature that the most powerful will inevitably remain at the top. Anyone can fall and most eventually do. (p. 8)

Although the quotation above was written for businesses, it can be paralleled with what has occurred in education in the age of being held to a greater degree of accountability. Therefore, it is incumbent upon school boards, superintendents, principals, teachers, and the rest of the supporting cast in education to step forward with the intent and focus to do what Reeves (2010) recommended -- examine causes rather than effects and tailor development programs for leaders that are intensive, on-going, and specific to the needs of the constituency being addressed.

## APPENDIX A



## THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Institutional Review Board

118 College Drive #5147  
 Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001  
 Tel: 601.266.6820  
 Fax: 601.266.5509  
 www.usm.edu/irb

**HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION REVIEW COMMITTEE  
 NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION**

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Human Subjects Protection Review Committee in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months. Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 10041303

PROJECT TITLE: **The Merits of Intensive Leadership Development Programs  
 on Building Administrators Sustainability**

PROPOSED PROJECT DATES: 04/01/2010 to 12/12/2011

PROJECT TYPE: **Dissertation or Thesis**

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: **Sonja J. Robertson**

COLLEGE/DIVISION: **College of Education & Psychology**

DEPARTMENT: **Educational Leadership and Counseling**

FUNDING AGENCY: **N/A**

HSPRC COMMITTEE ACTION: **Expedited Review Approval**

PERIOD OF APPROVAL: **06/14/2010 to 06/13/2011**

*Lawrence A. Hosman*  
 Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.  
 HSPRC Chair

*6-14-2010*  
 Date

APPENDIX B

INTENSIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (ILDP) COVER LETTER AND  
QUESTIONNAIRE

June 30, 2010

Dear Prospective Participant:

As a graduate student, fellow educator, and practicing administrator at the district level, I am interested in finding out your thoughts on intensive leadership development initiatives for practicing administrators at the district and school levels. The enclosed questionnaire consists of 59 questions addressing the topic.

The data collected from completed and returned questionnaires will be used in my doctoral study on, *Intensive Leadership Development Programs*. The questionnaire will take approximately twenty-five minutes to complete. Participation is voluntary and should you decide to participate, respondents will be anonymous and not identifying information will be requested. Confidentiality of all participants will be maintained.

Once you complete the survey instrument, please return it in the pre-stamped, addressed envelope provided in the original mailing. The return envelope is labeled with the final destination address only; therefore, results will not be connected to an individual school district or school administrator. Results from the study may be submitted for proposal to present at local and state sponsored conferences addressing the topic of leadership development for school based administrators, as well as for publication in various journals that address leadership development for school based administrators.

By returning the anonymous questionnaire, you are giving your consent to participate in the study. If you have any questions, you may e-mail me at [sonjarobertson@msn.com](mailto:sonjarobertson@msn.com). **Please return the completed questionnaire to Sonja Robertson, 2509 Honduras Drive, Gautier, MS 39553.**

The project and this consent form have been reviewed by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about the rights of the research participant should be directed to the chair of the Institution's Review Board at The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601)266-6820.

Thank you,

  
Sonja J. Robertson

## INTENSIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (ILDP) QUESTIONNAIRE

### Intensive Leadership Development Program (ILDP) Questionnaire

Directions: Select the best choice for each item regarding Intensive Leadership Development Programs (ILDPs) which are defined as professional development programs that last for three (3) or more days with the goal of building leadership capacity.

Demographics	Lead Teacher	Assistant Principal	Principal	Director	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
1. Administrative role in which I currently serve						
2. Administrative role(s) in which I have served(Choose all that apply)						

Gender	Male	Female
3. I am a		

Ethnicity	Caucasian	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	Native American	Other
4. I classify my ethnicity as						

Tenure	Less than 1 year	1-3 Years	3-5 Years	5-10 Years	10 – 20 Years	More than 20 Years
5. I have served in my current position for						
6. I have _____ years of experience in education.						
7. I have _____ years of experience in educational administrative roles.						

Participation: (Choose all that apply)	Orientation/School Leaders (OSL)	Millsaps Principals' Institute	Harvard Principals' Institute	National Institute/School Leaders	Other Leadership Development Program	I have not attended a Leadership Development Program
8. I have attended						

Participation:	Lead Teacher	Assistant Principal	Principal	Director	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent	Neither
9. I attended the following ILDP's as a: (Choose all that apply for a-c)							
a. Orientation for School Leaders (OSL)							
b. Millsaps Principals' Institute							
c. Harvard Principals' Institute							
d. The National Institute for School Leadership							
e. Other Leadership Development Program							

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
10. The ILDP I attended was selected based upon a needs assessment conducted by my district.					
11. School based-administrators disseminate materials from ILDPs with district leaders.					
12. Support by district level administrators increases the likelihood of school level administrators participating in ILDPs.					
13. Selection of the ILDPs I attended was based upon its focus on leadership best practices.					



Items continued	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
14. There is not an incentive package that includes participation in ILDPs in my district.					
15. Longevity in the principalship is linked to participation in ILDPs.					
16. My district provides administrators with all expense paid opportunities to participate in ILDPs as an incentive for effective leadership practices.					
17. Participation in ILDPs led to networking opportunities with school based administrators in: (respond to each item a-c)					
a. My state					
b. Other states					
c. Other countries					
18. Participation in ILDPs contributed to my longevity in building level leadership.					
19. One's implementation of strategies taught through ILDPs is an example of his/her duty to building level leadership.					
20. Participation in ILDPs is an uncommon practice for administrators in my district.					
21. Lack of participation in ILDPs lead to departure from school level administration.					
22. My district requires that a minimum of one strategy learned from ILDPs be implemented within a specified timeframe upon completion of ILDP.					
23. Participation in ILDPs is a demonstration of one's dedication to being developed as a leader.					
24. Participation in ILDPs contributed to my confidence in the role of a school based administrator.					
25. One's obligation to participation in any one ILDP should not be required to exceed: (respond to each item a-d)					
a. 2 weeks					
b. 1 year					
c. 18 Months					
d. 2 Years					
26. My district encourages healthy competition for which participation in ILDPs is the reward.					
27. Participation in ILDPs was relevant to the needs in my building or district.					
28. Career growth beyond school level administration is determined more by politics rather than by participation in ILDPs.					
29. I view building level administration as a means to obtaining positions beyond the building level.					
30. My district has an informal measure of assessment for participation in professional development to determine overall value to the district					
31. My district approved requested professional leave allowing for my participation in ILDPs.					
32. School level administrators who seek out ILDPs have an increased likelihood of remaining in building level leadership.					
33. I am knowledgeable of my district's incentive package for administrators.					
34. Participation in ILDPs has directly contributed to my decision to remain the building level leadership roles.					
35. There is no formal requirement for sharing knowledge gained from participation in ILDPs with staff or colleagues.					
36. My district supports the implementation of new strategies learned from ILDPs.					
37. Applying the strategies learned from participation in ILDPs did not strengthen my leadership practices.					
38. Attending the ILDPs afforded me with access to a valuable source of information for building level leaders.					
39. Participation in ILDPs facilitated the alignment of my current leadership practices with research-based best practices.					
40. Participation in ILDPs is not supported financially by my district.					

Items continued	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
41. After participation in ILDPs I shared the strategies learned with the following individuals or groups in my district: <b>(respond to each item a-d)</b>					
a. Principals					
b. District level administrators (excluding the superintendent)					
c. School based leadership team					
d. The superintendent					
42. Principals are required to present any new strategy that they plan to implement to secure district support.					
43. Strategies I learned from participation in ILDPs were shared via: <b>(respond to each item a-d)</b>					
a. Word of mouth					
b. Informal Presentation					
c. Workshop/Seminar					
d. Formal Seminar					
44. Principals are not required to present any new strategy that they plan to implement to secure district support.					
45. Participation in ILDPs contributed to my growth as a school-level administrator.					
46. Participation in ILDPs has not directly contributed to my decision to remain in building level leadership roles.					
47. Participation in ILDPs is utilized as an incentive for building level administrators.					
48. My ILDP participation requirements included documentation of implementation of strategies that were applied.					
49. Developing my leadership skills is an example of my responsibility to building level leadership.					
50. Professional leave time is granted by my district for participation in ILDPs.					
51. Participation in ILDPs contributed to my movement into a district level position.					
52. Participation in ILDPs motivated me to remain in building level leadership.					
53. My current leadership practices are reflective of strategies applied after participation in one or more ILDPs.					
54. ILDP programs in which I have participated include required submission of documentation demonstrating implementation of program strategies in some form.					
55. The ILDP I attended was considered to be of value to my district.					
56. I view building level administration as a career.					
57. Participation in ILDPs did not contribute to my confidence in the role of a school based administrator.					
58. My district implements a formal intensive leadership development program for assistant principals and principals.					
59. Participation in ILDP as a building level administrator did not meet my leadership needs.					

Please return the completed survey to:

Sonja Robertson  
2509 Honduras Drive  
Gautier, MS 39553

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